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THE GREATER WATERLOO

· ROBERT · RICHARDSON ·



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Perkin

The Greater Waterloo

A Love Story

BY

~~ROBERT RICHARDSON~~

M. M. Perkins.

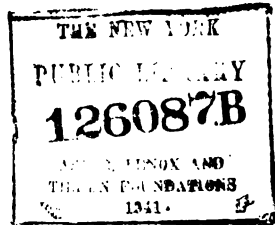
*"'Twere all one
That I should love a bright particular star
And think to wed it."*



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The Greater Waterloo

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PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS:

HEINRICH GLEBE.....Retired officer living at Waterloo,
Canada.

MINA GLEBE.....His spinster daughter.

GRETCHEN GLEBE.....Niece of Heinrich.

MARTIN KRANZ (the Abbot).The miser-shopkeeper of Waterloo.

KARL KRANZ..Son of Martin.

PETER ERB.....The Lutheran Clergyman of Wa-
terloo.

JOHANNA WINKLE.....Family helper at "Glebeholm."

JOHANN WINKLE.....Her husband.

GUSTAV HEINK.....Stage driver.

WALTER WRENN JENNINGS.An Englishman.

DELIA JENNINGS.....Sister of Walter.

THE GREATER WATERLOO.

CHAPTER I.

KARL KRANZ.

Two candles sputtered on a low mantel-shelf and cast their uncertain, unsteady glimmer upon a face before them. The face was thin, the cheeks pale and the whole countenance expressive of some deep emotion that had just swept over it. There had been storm, then calm, but the calm of anguish rather than the calm of peace. The lips were closed firmly and seemed paler and less sympathetic than their wont, which showed the depths of the emotion and the nature of the determination it had wrenched within the youth. "Yes," said Karl Kranz, pinching one of the candles that had just sputtered its last, "I am resolved to go, come what may, happen what will. I must go."

He turned over a stained almanac which lay before him on the mantel. "The twenty-third of May!" he exclaimed. "I had almost forgotten it was May. I have seen so few flowers and have

heard only the hum of nails and screws, and the song of the old Abbot, raised from flat to sharp, according to my misdemeanor."

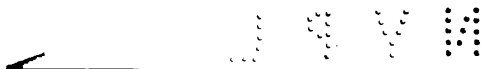
The Abbot evidently sat in the adjoining room, the shop-room, for Karl nodded his head toward the half open door in the south wall, and, further, it was evident that the Abbot had been scolding much of late, for as Karl repeated his name his lips tightened and his eyes flashed with youthful indignation and resentment.

"There's the bell," he murmured after a pause, "nails again and screws, I'll be bound. Thank heaven I will hear heavier lead soon, cannon and death-shot."

He nipped the second candle and stumbled in the dark to the shop door. "Good-evening," said a strange, cheery voice, as he entered. "Give me a hammer and some half-inch tacks please."

"Tacks, tacks, nails again," thought Karl, as he mechanically drew out a box labelled "half-inchers." He had, however, caught the tone of the stranger's voice, and the order for a hammer was some variation from the usual one.

"It is still wet," the damsel continued as cheerfully as if it had been moonlight, "but I hope it will be fine to-morrow, for I want to explore the village. I am a stranger and I hear there are pretty woods all about here, full



of wild flowers. Can you tell me the best woods for the hepatica, our little Canadian May-flower?"

"I think to the east," Karl answered brightening. "I used to get a great many there. I haven't been out this spring, but I think there will be some left still."

"Oh, yes, I saw some as I was driving here this afternoon, and my aunt said she had seen some when she was gathering flowers for the church."

"Oh, Miss Glebe?"

"Yes, how did you know?"

"She always keeps old Erb supplied at the church. I only guessed. You are her niece, then?"

"Surely, if she's my aunt," Gretchen concluded, taking up her parcels with a saucy smile. "Good-evening."

"Good-evening," Karl replied simply, holding the shop-lamp in the door to light her across the street. "Yes, she's turned in Glebeholm gate," he said to himself, returning the lamp to the counter. "She must be the one the Abbot spoke of. I remember he called her a gay bird with a black feather, because her father disgraced the old gent and his daughter by some love affair when he was a widower. She doesn't seem black feathered though, only blackeyed. They are fine eyes too, that flash at one like two

bits of coal before a fire. Maybe she's wild though. She probably is, or she wouldn't come across the street, at this hour, alone."

By this time he had pulled out a faded book of maps, covered with dust. After brushing it he opened it beside the lamp and slowly turned over leaf after leaf until he found the one headed "Europe."

"Here we are," he said half smiling. "Let me see. . . . There are England, London and France. I suppose the army will cross here. How queer it will be to be so far away. There's Brussels, too," he continued, pressing his finger on a pale green patch with a black dot. "I'll be there some day, perhaps. What's the meridian? The——"

"Well, well," broke in a shrill voice, "you was even so taken up with that you didn't hear the bell. It beats all how you fellers takes on the fightin' fit so. 'Twould be better for you if you'd study the good word and go as preachers to them folks instead of blowin' the tops of their heads off."

"Maybe they'll blow the top of mine off," Karl replied rather sadly. "A fellow couldn't be a preacher anyway with nothing to study but nails and pig iron all day. Anyway what's the use of scolding, Mother Winkle. I'm a hard one, and I've made up my mind."

"The discontent of youth these days is amazing," Johanna Winkle continued, with emphasis. "Why, when I was young, I hit on Johann and was as happy as a lark, and then I hit on the Lord and have been happier 'en larks ever since. That's the whole trouble with you. You haven't struck rock bottom. You haven't hit on the Lord."

"Well, Mother Winkle, we all can't be furnished with a drill-pipe like yours, that strikes rock bottom in a day."

"The spirit is my drill, and faith its work-in' engine. Praise His name. . . . What's the price of them gold-headed tacks?"

"Fifty a score."

"Give me ten for tenpence, like a dear boy?"

"I will as a parting gift, Mother Winkle," Karl answered, "but not because you merit it, being a Christian, as you call yourself. . . . What is in you people anyway that you spend so much on prayers, and books of prayers, yet can't buy a common thing from a common man for a common price?"

"You do surprise even me," gasped Mother Winkle, "who am the constant buttress of the sinner's arrow. The Lord's children deserve to have things for nothing, and they would if most merchants wasn't heathens or thieves."

"Perhaps," sighed Karl wearily, "perhaps."

"The tacks is to tack up twelve texts in the young misses' room. I reckon she's out of the fold so I must put precious words before her eyes, to make her see the dark wilderness ahead with the one narrow path to life running through as a stream to the thirsty."

"It takes more than texts and gold-headed tacks to make a wall a wilderness, Mother Winkle."

"There's much ahead more than the wall, and you'd best find it out. I wonder the prayers of this Christian settlement haven't pierced your youthful mail of pride long ago."

"They are too dull to pierce anything but air, Mother Winkle; but don't be angry. I am only teasing you and I'm going away soon and then I won't trouble you with either taunts or prayers." He added this because Mother Winkle seemed to be in a purple-faced condition and he was sorry for her emotional centre. He would spare it an outburst and shattering. As he hoped, the thought of his going so far away, soothed the good woman. Her heavy breast exhaled its superfluous hot air and dropped visibly while her inflated gray eyes contracted and resumed their usual sockets.

"So you are," she said with a touch of motherly affection in her voice, "the village folk

will miss you, even if the church of the Lord does not."

At this juncture of the conversation the Abbot scratched his forehead and slid off the nail-cask upon which he had been sitting reading. Mother Winkle glanced suspiciously at the book he still held and read the title which was written in large red letters, "The Battle Field." Her surprise was great. A happy thought had struck her.

"That's it, Brother Kranz," she exclaimed vehemently, "the field of battle is life. How do you fight these days?"

The old Abbot frowned, for he disliked disturbance, and was always greatly disturbed by Mother Winkle's voice.

"What say you?" he snarled. "This battle's in France. Fought by my countrymen with real flesh and blood, swords and pistols. It's no mind battle, fought with imagination and weeping against fresh air, such as you women love to fight, mark you that."

Mother Winkle was silent, for she had met her superior in volcanic action. The Abbot did not often erupt, but when he did everyone about him was buried in the hot lava of his words. After freeing himself of this fire and brimstone he felt cooler within, and was able to replace his spectacles and return to his nail keg to read.

Whereat Mother Winkle, gray and gloomy, exhumed herself from the débris of the argument, and bowed herself sideways to the door.

When she had passed out Karl laughed loudly, which caused the Abbot to look up from his book. At first an expression of anger covered his face, but when he noticed the map before Karl he softened, resuming his book with moistened eyes. For some time father and son sat thus in silence. Indeed remained so until the little cuckoo came out twelve times, popping in with a joyous click at his day's work being over.

"My," said Karl, rousing himself and looking up. "It's later than I thought. Let's go to bed, sire. I am dead tired and must pack to-morrow."

But the Abbot read on, so Karl passed into the bedroom alone, sighing as he pushed open the door. "Such is life," he murmured, as he struck the flint on the tinder. "I'd sooner be a mule and drag stones than be a man in this hole, for if I were a mule I wouldn't care whether he answered me or not."

He struck the flint the second time with force, and a spark blazed out in front of him like a star, revealing a face in a black ebony frame. He started as he caught the plaintive expression of the dark eyes and then the spark went out. He struck the flint the third time by the far end of

the mantel, that he might escape the sad countenance in the little frame, and this time he struck a light. Some minutes after, while moving to the bed with the candle, he was seized with a sudden impulse to look at the sad face once more, so he held the flame before it. The large eyes were still full of their lustrous melancholy and the mouth though sad, was sweet. A true likeness of Frau Kranz, his mother, dead since his infancy. Karl did not remember her, but yet in his imagination he knew her perfectly. For several moments he gazed at her, his face unconsciously taking on her very look, and then as if in answer to a silent question, he whispered, "I must go. I can't bear it any longer."

Snuffing the light, he noticed that the lamp still burned in the shop. The picture and the light met together strangely in his mind and made him for the first time sympathetic toward his old sire. Looking through the door he said gently, "It's very late, good sire. Come to bed."

But the Abbot only frowned.

CHAPTER II.

THE VILLAGE SEES GRETCHEN.

THE morning was clear, as Gretchen had hoped, so she was up and out at an early hour to explore the grounds of her new home. Thus it happened that when Mother Winkle, or Johanna as she was called at Glebeholm, came around to look at her new charge and bring her the customary can of hot water and fresh towel, she found the room unoccupied, the bed empty, and, even worse, the furniture and bric-a-brac changed about and the floor littered with ribbons, bits of lace, caps, and other things.

"What a child!" said Johanna with horror. "A hornet always lives in a hornet's nest. I must find Miss Mina. She will enjoy it, I think not."

"So saying she threw the towels on a chest near by, set the can down emphatically, and hurried importantly out of the room. Very soon the two women returned. Miss Mina small and lean, Johanna greatly puffed.

"Just see," the latter remarked, flinging out her arms impressively, "just see what the wild thing has done."

Miss Mina glanced about with sharp eyes, unconsciously picking up a bit of scarlet ribbon, a photograph, a roll of faded birch-bark, and a piece of pussy willow.

"What d'ye think you, or rather the master, has bargained for?" Johanna said, looking at her mistress cautiously. "I'm certain on't I don't bargain to tidy her room for her."

"No, indeed," replied Miss Mina, biting her words to show her disapproval of Johanna's attitude as well as of her niece's untidiness. "She shall keep her room tidy herself. She shall begin to-day. Where is she now?"

Johanna shook her head, disappointed at her mistress' apparent unconcern, for she dearly loved commotion, and especially loved it if she were the moving spirit. Picking up the water-can and towels she glumly set them in their places while Miss Mina pried into every corner.

Gretchen had no keys. Everything she possessed was at the mercy of her aunt's wiry finger and sharp eye. Thus Miss Mina found much to interest her, for she had never before seen the interesting side of the teens. She found numerous articles of wearing apparel on top of a good bonnet, and a pair of heavy boots lying on a delicate frock. Both arrangements were typical of Gretchen's character, which was built of strata of fine and coarse, delicate and rough, but Miss

Mina knew it not. She thought it badness, nothing but deliberate, downright badness.

Searching a little farther she came across a packet of letters tied with dainty blue ribbon. Her little gray eyes shone as she untied the bow and read the topmost letter, which ran thus:

DEAREST GRETCHEN:

While sleighing on Beaver Hall Hill I found a glove of thine. I picked it up with joy and now, at thy pleasure, have it stored among my treasures. I will finger and fondle it often as I used to your white hand, and I will kiss it when I can no longer kiss thee.

Your faithful, weeping

JOSEPH.

MONTREAL, Jan. 12, 1813.

"How absurd!" she exclaimed sourly. "What infant has prattled here with pen, I wonder?"

At these words Johanna turned about to look at her mistress, but as she was not taken into the secret, she continued to dust some dustless table-legs, still hoping for a commotion. Miss Mina then opened a second letter, the contents of which alarmed her so much she stood upon her tiptoes.

"See here, Johanna," she gasped, "see this."

But when Johanna, full of interest, bustled over to her, she folded it gravely and put it in

her kerchief, saying, "I think I'd better keep it to myself." Whereupon Johanna sniffed the air and was very much offended. Still she remained in the room in hopes of a commotion.

Feeling her kerchief nervously, to find if the missive was safe, Miss Mina pulled out a third letter, but no sooner had she done so than Gretchen bounded into the room, rosy and as fresh as the morning. How quickly the morning can cloud! Alas, not as quickly as the mind. When she saw the trespassers she stopped and looked at them in silence, the color leaving her cheek.

"Come in," said her aunt with an icy smile, "come in, my niece."

"If I am your niece," said Gretchen slowly, "you are my aunt, and must respect me as I you. You have no right to open those letters."

Miss Mina purpled about the eyes and after a moment's nervous hesitation moved to Johanna and said something about dinner. But Gretchen, not easily overthrown, followed her, saying, "How did you like the second letter?"

"It was disgraceful," her aunt snapped.

"Well, now that you have read it you know what I am like. I need not tell you further. I thought to make the past the past, but you have unearthed it, so must bury it again yourself."

Miss Mina's eyes gleamed. "Your father

was a sweet villain," she hissed, "and so are you. I am glad I have been so soon initiated into your secret thoughts and purposes; but, mark me, your fall is soon if you walk in his steps."

"Don't worry about my secret society," Gretchen said paling, "but mark you in turn, it will take more than initiation to discover its codes."

"What impertinence," said Johanna, secretly enjoying it all.

"How dare you speak so to your elders," cried Miss Mina shrilly.

"My aunt is older and can know less, and read my letters, while I am younger and should know better and hold my tongue."

Miss Mina could stand it no longer, so left the room, weeping dry, sentimental tears, and Johanna, satisfied with the commotion, followed her.

When alone, Gretchen made fast the door and at once looked over her letters. "The second one is gone," she exclaimed, "she must have taken it. It was the one my father wrote to Stella soon after my mother's death, asking her to marry him. I should have burned it. What a fool I was."

Walking to the window as was her habit when in deep thought, she beheld her grandfather in the garden below.

"Dear old gentleman," she said softly, "I know him anyway, and I think I can make him love me, but, when he sees that letter, he may hate me as he did my father. That woman Johanna told me how stern he could be at times."

Poor Gretchen looked wild at the thought. All her friends and family had so stamped the image of her wildness on her mind, she could become wild unconsciously, by even thinking of it. At fifteen years of age, this sensitiveness about her wildness was pathetic. She had spent the last five years of her life in a convent near Montreal, where at times she had felt like a caged lioness, and in fact was like one. Her father had occasionally visited her. She remembered how proud she had been of him as he rode up to the convent door, erect and handsome. His witty, exaggerated speech had made her laugh many times, and even yet his castles in the air, though quite dissolved, were fairy haunts of her memory. He seemed fond of her always and yet his heart was turned to someone else. She had wondered whom it was he loved but could not find out, until one day, her dearest school friend, four years her senior, had shown her one of her father's love-letters, the one Miss Mina now had. She recalled how shocked she had been at her friend's disclosure,

and how mortified when Mr. Simms visited the school and saw the letter. How angry he was on leaving the school, and how viciously and maliciously he had attacked her father, ruining his name and fortune. Then followed her father's sudden disappearance; his still more sudden death, and the letter to the sisters from her grandfather in Waterloo. Thus, as she stood at the window she recalled it all, and when the possible result of the letter came to her mind she was forced to exclaim, "Why am I here anyway? Why am I alive?" But then her nature overruled her mood and she exclaimed, a second time, in more lively tones, "I'm here because I'm here, I suppose. I've got to live until I die, so I might as well make the best of it."

Such speeches may seem strange, but they were the outbursts of the girl's spirit, which could not be contained in the same mood for long. While at school these outbursts were in long soliloquies, or in conversations with some inanimate object made animate.

The bell in the little church near by was at this time tuning its tongue to call all good Lutherans to service, in a quarter of an hour. Gretchen started at the sound, for she had been bidden to dress herself for church and was still in her old frock. Johanna entered to inspect her, explaining that she was going with the

Colonel, so must look her best. She objected to Gretchen's tam-o'-shanter, and was quite upset when she learned it was her best head-dress. However, she contented herself with a picture of Gretchen as she would appear next Sabbath, after she had "fitted her out."

Gretchen found her grandfather waiting for her in the garden, and though he also objected to the tam-o'-shanter, he seemed pleased with her general appearance, and smiled as she took his arm and hurried him down the driveway at a half run. She had quite won his heart already, and he determined to give a deaf ear to the complaining women of the household.

"I think you look like me," she said whimsically, "don't you think so?"

"Hush," we are going to church, he said, suppressing a smile, "remember this is a day of dignity."

Entering the church they were the objects of many side-glances, and the subjects of many side-whispers. The Colonel was conscious of these, but Gretchen took her seat simply, and in turn looked at her observers.

There was a large congregation, which meant a good deal of difference of opinion regarding the new arrival. Some thought she was handsome and sparkling, while others said her hair and eyes were too dark, and her mouth too

large for anything but mediocre beauty. Others again said she resembled her father, and these shook their beplumed heads with doubtful speculation. What Peter Erb the clergyman thought could not be ascertained, for he was intent upon the letter of the law—closely intent, being short-sighted. Therefore he only glanced up to give out a hymn to his flock and was again intent upon the letter of the hymn.

Gretchen watched him with much interest. Indeed several of the neighbors had to find the places for her in the books, so abstracted was she. The Misses Zoellner, two adherent church members, very barnacles on its pillars, sat just to the right, and these two ladies took every opportunity to examine Gretchen. Of the two, the younger was able to give the best account of her after the service, for, being low church, she could take the intervals in which her sister was engaged in bowing or crossing her lean breast, to look at Gretchen.

After the benediction the Colonel was besieged by persons inquiring about Miss Mina's health. He had never known her to be popular before. He little dreamt that Gretchen was the cause of her aunt's popularity, for these kind inquirers, mostly women, wanted to have a close look at the new-comer, to decide if her cheeks were a natural pink, her eyebrows really black,

and her hair naturally wavy. The Misses Zoellner came at the end of this line, for they always watched good Peter out of the church with his band of white angels.

"My dear," the younger said gushingly to Gretchen, "Mr. Erb, dear man, is a trifle high, but I love the old church just the same, and I just omit the high parts, keeping humbly in the lower walks. May I inquire which way you incline?"

Gretchen thought a moment and then replied, with a twinkle in her eye:

"I sit upright, Miss Zoellner, I don't incline."

"But, child," Miss Zoellner continued walking edgeways, "in the question of creeds, I mean."

"Yes, so do I," Gretchen said, pulling a long bit of grass and nibbling it playfully, "I sit upright in a creed of my own. I can't recline or incline in it, for I love it, and as no one else knows it, they can't recline or incline in an opposite direction."

"You strange and ridiculous girl," Miss Emma exclaimed. "It is a beautiful day, is it not? I always let religion alone when it comes to argument."

"Yes, the sun is better for the soul than argument."

Miss Zoellner was dazed, and remarked to her

sister, when they had passed Glebeholm, that she was uncertain of the girl's wits.

Behind the Zoellners and Gretchen an unnoticed figure moved, clad in a dark military cloak that looked as if it might have come through the American war. And indeed, if one could have seen the eagles on the silver buttons, this would have been an easy conclusion. But what mattered cut or country to Karl? It was military, that was enough. If Gretchen had turned as she entered the gate, she would have seen this tall being with its strange coat and pale face gazing at her with eyes full of inquisitive interest. Happily fate interposed. Lying in the grass beside the gate was a small red book. Karl picked it up, and was just looking in the fly-leaf when a voice addressed him.

"Thank you greatly, Mr. Kranz," it said with some temerity, "it is a nice day for the woods and May flowers."

Karl bowed very low, somehow afraid to look Gretchen in the face, and by the time he had straightened himself, she was gone. Tracing his steps carefully across the road, he felt ashamed of his silence, and mildly cursed himself for not having offered to take her to the woods. But then, as he saw his name over the shop-door, he smiled bitterly, and went in muttering, "a common tradesman, only a shop-keeper!"

CHAPTER III.

GRETCHEN.

SUNDAY afternoon being fine, many of the village couples floated past the Zoellner homestead. There were old dames and gallants, and young belles and beaux, familiar and unfamiliar faces.

Each, as they passed, nodded to Miss Emma who occupied the porch with a youth wearing a military cape. Karl had come to say good-by to this aristocrat, shop bred though he was. The elder sister was not present, for this lady, realizing the height of her family tree, became suddenly dizzy when Karl appeared, and was forced to seek her smelling-salts and chintz couch. What a family tree it was to be sure. Its root sprang in Devonshire in the estate of Lord Unknown. How high it was, and how dizzy it had made her as she looked from its heights upon the earth, the common clay, a common Kranz!

"Tell me your ambitions," Miss Emma said with spinster sentiment, thinking ambitions the subject to please all youths. "Tell me when

you expect to sail on the great deep and why you want to fight that dreadful, awful, Frenchman, Napoleon?"

"I sail on the thirtieth," Karl replied, fingering his braided cap with no little pride. "I don't think I want to fight Napoleon though, I think I want more to see him, for I admire him."

"You dreadful disloyal boy," she cried, loud enough to make the passers-by stare, "what would the dear king say if he knew he had a canker-worm so near his heart?"

"He'd put me to suck another man's heart, I suppose," Karl answered good-naturedly.

"Yes, indeed! That of the awful Napoleon, that ogre of Europe. But remember you must be loyal, even if you are not a good shot."

"Good shot," echoed Karl much amused. "You have certainly hit me upon a sore spot, for I know my weakness with a gun. You see I've never been able to hunt, but I don't like it any way. It is poor sport to riddle the happy woodland creatures."

"You are still a child and will get over that."

"I only go to the war to get rid of the shop with its eternal pig iron."

This reminder of his trade made Miss Emma shudder a little, but her conscience bade her be firm and swerve not, as it was her duty to speed the king's soldier, whether he be rich or poor.

"Your father is a book-worm," she added, taking up the thread of conversation daintily, "what can there be so engrossing in his line of literature? I should think a few catalogues would suffice for his business."

Karl felt the sting of the words, but inwardly laughed, for he pictured the day when she might be glad to hold out her apron to catch something from the mushroom family tree of the Kranzes.

Receiving no reply, she continued, this time speaking of Peter Erb, dear man. But she had not said many words before Johanna and Gretchen entered the gateway. At sight of Gretchen Karl felt the old feeling of mingled admiration and dislike take possession of him, and as she came toward him his dislike grew, for she looked cross and imperious.

"I had to come out with Johanna," she said without a word of greeting. "May she sit here, Miss Zoellner, while I take a run into the woods?"

For a moment Miss Emma hesitated, but then, taking compassion on the panting, purple woman, she consented with a nod.

"You said you would show me the best woods," Gretchen continued, addressing Karl; "will you come with me now?"

At this Miss Zoellner looked scandalized, and

Mother Winkle doubly puffed, trying to find her breath to speak, but Karl was alert and answered in the affirmative without hesitation.

"Imagine sending Johanna with me to the woods," the girl said to him as they crossed the lawn. "I knew she never could walk this far, but my aunt insisted and so did she. I hope she's learned a lesson. We must be good neighbors and friends," she continued gaily, "for you told me you loved the woods too, and I could always go with you when you went flowering. It's quite impossible to go into the woods with a frying-pan around your neck, and that's what Johanna is, for she never ceases to talk about her pans and kettles. What do you think of such people?"

"They are always stewing over an imaginary fire of some kind, like the pan," Karl ventured. "The woods are too lovely to be savored with the kitchen."

Gretchen laughed heartily. She detected the wit in her companion and rejoiced in it.

"This is Pine Hollow," he said to satisfy her demands in a companion. "To the left there is a little stream, but before we go there we will hunt among these stumps for hepaticas."

Gretchen was full of joy when she saw a little purple patch here and one pinker there. She caressed them with real love, loath to pluck them.

"I used to come here often," Karl said, beginning to pull them; "but lately I've been tied to the store, and I can tell you I have missed them more than I would have missed my meals."

"I am sure of it," Gretchen said, gazing at him reverently as was her habit with everyone who loved nature. "It's a pity you can't get someone to help you in the store. I think I see the brook there with marigolds on its edge. What a pretty sash of yellow they make against the green underwood. Listen! There's a lovely bird. Is it a thrush? There it is again, listen!"

Karl listened, but was not sure of the bird's identity.

"Let us come out here next Sunday," she added enthusiastically. "It is the prettiest place I have ever seen."

But Karl did not reply to her invitation, for he knew where he would be in a week's time, and she, thinking him unwilling, did not repeat it. His lack of enthusiasm rather disappointed her, and she pulled the last marigold feebly.

"Perhaps we had better go now," she said, rising to her feet. "They will be tired waiting for us," and Karl, absent-minded, thinking of his departure with a touch of regret, for the first time, went with her without a word.

When they reached the Zoellner mansion they found Johanna on the porch with the Colo-

nel, Miss Zoellner being still indisposed and Miss Emma indoors with Miss Mina, steeping tea and discussing Gretchen's excursion with Karl. The truants were greeted by the Colonel kindly; but Miss Mina appearing suddenly, gave Karl a cutting glance. He guessed the bitterness behind it and groaned in his spirit that he had been born in poverty. Often he had groaned thus, for Waterloo aristocracy was a cruel trust, in which only pedigreed, imported Englishmen could invest. Feeling his presence distasteful to the company he bade the Colonel and Gretchen good-by and left the porch. The Colonel noted his fine bearing and remarked on it, whereupon Miss Mina pinched his arm and frowned at Gretchen.

"It is a good thing he is going away from Waterloo," she snapped, "for he's quite forgotten his place in society. The idea of you, Gretchen Glebe, my niece, associating with a hardware clerk. What is the world coming to?"

"Common sense," Gretchen retorted. "I hope Waterloo will be the first place of its distribution in Canada."

"Father, speak to the child," Miss Mina whined, "she is disgracing you."

"Here is Miss Zoellner with some of her fine Ceylon tea," said the Colonel, turning aside

his daughter's words. "How kind of you to trouble, Miss Zoellner."

"Not at all," said the elder sister, revived by his voice, "it is a pleasure."

"Just as if she made it," her sister whispered aloud to Miss Mina, "and she did not put a finger to it." Miss Zoellner at this darted a fiery glance in her direction, which silenced her immediately.

"Where were you born, child?" she said to Gretchen imperiously, "in Montreal?"

"I think so."

"When were you born?"

"On the 24th of June, 1800."

"Just fifteen then?"

"No, fifteen now, nothing then."

At this the Colonel laughed, being off his guard, but Miss Zoellner was ruffled.

"You are a trifle crude," she said haughtily, "but I suppose a little good society will rub off your rough corners."

"You like smooth people then?" Gretchen said smiling. "I hope you will never like me."

"A beautiful day, is it not," Miss Zoellner said, turning to the Colonel, wisely refraining from further argument. "The heavens are as clear as amethysts and the verdant earth as green and sparkling as an emerald."

"Yes," replied the Colonel, seeking a poetic

expression in her face to match her words, and finding none, "but the mist is rising. We must be going."

"So soon," said the sisters in duet, "so soon?"

"Yes," he replied with impatience, "come, Gretchen."

The two ladies hung about Miss Mina's neck, and she in turn gave them little pecks of kisses. Passers-by would have exclaimed at the affection of the women. Alas, they did not know that each sighed secretly at the parting, afterward declaring how bored she had been.

CHAPTER IV.

KARL'S FAREWELL.

It being Monday morning, the morning of Karl's departure, the little corner store was early astir. The old Abbot was seen before daylight in the side-yard, tying up Karl's baggage, which consisted of an enormous carpet-bag. . And as he stood in the chill air his fingers grew stiff and blue, and once a tear dropped from his eye, ashamed of which he turned quickly around to see if anyone had witnessed it.

He had not spoken six words to Karl about his leaving home, but the manner in which he tied and untied the rope on the carpet-bag showed he was mindful of his son's belongings if not of the son.

Karl, passing the window, caught sight of his father as he bent over the carpet-bag. As he watched him he saw the hands tremble, and the shoulder-bones protrude like knives from beneath the faded waistcoat.

"The poor Abbot," he said to himself, "he won't live forever. I must remember that."

Stepping from the door he laid his hand on the old man's shoulder and said frankly, "This is kind of you, but too hard."

"Tut," said his father drawing down his brows as if to hide the offensive eye. "My generation was no doughnut generation. See to't you don't untie this till you get to London town."

"So you do care for me?" Karl whispered with moistened eyes. "I'm glad you do."

"Care for you," the old man growled. "What's that to do with untying this? Be off to your work."

Karl sighed and dropped the hand that had meant to caress the Abbot, while an expression of shame covered his face.

"I won't forget you or that photograph," he ventured in a whisper. "I won't forget the old shop."

"Tush," cried the Abbot angrily, "attend to business. There's some one at the shop-door."

Turning slowly, Karl beheld Mother Winkle panting beneath a large basket of spring vegetables.

"Why, Mother Winkle, you are out early," he said, cheering himself with her broad grin. "Where's the market to-day?"

"At Jeremy's, I reckon, but I ain't taken up with that. It's just this way," she added in a

voice unlike her own. "I was set on givin' you a present before you left; a keepsake; and as Johann was out of pennies and me the like, I just says to myself, Mother Winkle, there's God's things out in the garden. Pick a few and sell 'em and buy the boy somethin'."

Karl was perplexed and blushed a little. He was wondering what Gretchen would say when she found he had taken a present from Johanna, thus putting himself on her level. Johanna would no doubt proclaim it far and near.

"Be quick," Johanna urged. "Time's goin' by like a whirlwind. I want to know what to buy."

"Why, anything you like," Karl replied with hesitation, but then added, as if by inspiration, "I know—just the thing! I'd rather have it than anything! Get one of those books of 'Goethe' Peter Erb has for sale in his parlor window for the Abbot. He's been eying it for seven months. That's the thing to do."

"A what?" Mother Winkle exclaimed. "If you'd said a dictionary or a great book on the hidden things of heaven and earth, I could have bought it better; but those books of Peter's, why, they're as old as Samson and all off color. Who's the man again?"

"Goethe, our wonderful writer."

"Oh, yes, I've heard on him. He was a bad one, he was."

"Surely you're thinking of someone else."

"Not me. I heard on him long past, but if he's your choice, why have him."

"Give it to the Abbot," Karl said persuasively. "I'll tell you a secret. He's been hankering after that book for seven months and—well, I'll tell you, he can't get it because he owes some big debt somewhere and has to save every penny he can. I can't find out where it is, but I will some day."

"Yes," said Mother Winkle wisely. "Well, I'll get it to please you."

Karl thanked her, feeling much relieved that the gift was not coming to him. He noticed that she recrossed the road and spoke to Gretchen instead of going to Jeremy's market, and thought it strange, but at the same time not unusual, as Gretchen might have a message for her, or an errand at Jeremy's.

"Counted those nails yet," the Abbot said, poking his head in the door. This made Karl dive furiously into a newly opened nail-keg and begin to count.

"One, two, three—small, medium, large," he counted over and over until he forgot the nails themselves and imagined himself on the battlefield with bullets, shrapnel, and cannon here;

there, everywhere. He wondered which would wound him. Probably all three. He would fall and perhaps be killed, but he pictured, on the other hand, a bright home-coming, with Gretchen to meet him, when he would lay a bag of gold in the Abbot's lap and say, "This is the debt. Come away from the store and read Goethe."

Thus, in his reverie, he did not hear a light step in the store, nor feel two dark earnest eyes fixed upon him. Gretchen stood in the shadow of the door and contemplated him. How splendid his head was! A little narrow, but high and rounded. How firm the mouth, with its thin pale lips. How white the cheeks, too thin perhaps, but suiting well the pointed chin. Altogether he was fine. Some said refined or intelligent, but Gretchen, in her mind, insisted on fine.

At length, realizing the awkwardness of her position if Karl should discover her first, she coughed and turned to the window to examine a certain jackknife that lay far over near the glass. Karl hastened toward her and made many excuses for his preoccupation. She was not hard on him, being too intent on her knife to think of him.

"I want it for the woods," she said naturally. "Do you think it is too large to carry about?"

"Not a bit too large," he replied, wrapping it up. "I would like to be going with you on some of your trips."

"Well, I suppose we can't always do as we would like," she said with mock gravity, repaying him for his silence on Sunday. "It wouldn't be good for us."

Her reply fell like a cold stone on Karl's breast and he rebuked himself for mentioning such a thing. "Sunday is Sunday," he said with bitterness, "and Monday is Monday."

"Good-by," Gretchen called back from the door, "I wish you good luck, but I wish you wouldn't fight."

At her words he could have thrown off his braided coat, trampled on his military cloak; torn open his carpet-bag and ground his new gun to powder. In fact he could have kissed the hem of her cloak and cried, "I will never fight if you don't like it. But, alas, she was out of sight and he, wiping the perspiration from his neckcloth, called himself fool, idiot, lunatic, simpleton.

Repeating these epithets over and over he laid his head on the counter against a strange parcel with a strange smell. He sniffed it closely and whispered almost unconsciously, "Peter Erb." Examining it he was sure it was

Peter Erb's, for he recognized the peculiar odor attached to Erb's house and everything in it.

"The book!" he exclaimed, tearing off the wrapper. "Two books!" And opening the first he read:

"To my esteemed young friend, Karl Kranz,
From Gretchen Glebe."

And in the second:

"To my venerable neighbor, Martin Kranz,
From Gretchen Glebe."

"Look here," he called to the Abbot, "here's a present for you."

"A present," muttered the Abbot. "Who's the fool that thought I'd take a present?"

"No fool," replied Karl, "a fine girl. See, it's Goethe."

"Goethe in a wilderness. Might as well read Psalms in a desert."

"Never mind," Karl said in consoling tones, "the effects of the war will be over soon. Iron's up a cent already."

"Oh, fool," hissed the old man. "That's a drop in a pail for a thirsty horse. And you'll miss that coach and then there'll be two horses to drink instead of one."

Karl felt the poison in the words and took up his book and bag without further good-by. As

he ran along the road the villagers cheered him, and the little group waiting at the crossroad waved frantically to him. They were surprised to see father and son coming separately, for the old Abbot hobbled behind, but supposed it was one of the old man's notions.

"Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!" they cried hoarsely, as he approached. "Hurrah for Karl Kranz."

Karl, breathless, tried to thank each one, but only managed to speak when he came to Johanna, who stood beaming like the sun, two gold-lettered text-cards dangling from her clasped hands.

"Tell Miss Gretchen I have the book. Thank her for it, and say I go to save, not to destroy."

"Yes," said Johanna, only half comprehending his words. "Here's my gift I got with the vegetables."

"And here's mine," said another, "and here's a keepsake," said several, all loading him at once with gray mits, neckcloths, socks, and red wrist-bands, all home-made.

Karl stood bewildered, and then the Abbot came. This caused another cheer and bustle of excitement, it being so seldom he put his foot outside his gate-post. After this, several compassionate women relieved Karl of his treasures,

so that he was able to give a few handshakes and stretch his cramped arm muscles.

"The coach, the coach," cried Johanna. "Lift him in, sisters!" At which Karl was lifted by his strong women friends, and at the shout of Gustav and the men deposited in the coach. Rather red and tumbled he closed the door smiling bashfully at his friends on the road. Another cheer went up and then, at the lash of the long whip, the coach started and was soon lost in a cloud of dust.

CHAPTER V.

FATHER ERB CALLS.

WITH great excitement Johanna entered the room where Miss Mina sat peacefully reading "Golden Thoughts."

"The preacher is here, misses, the preacher."

"The clergyman, Father Erb, you mean," replied Miss Mina stiffly. "Show him in to my father and then find Miss Gretchen."

"Yes, that I will," Johanna said with satisfaction. "She needs all the preachers in the land to tend to her."

"Clergymen, I said," Miss Mina snapped. "Don't forget again."

When Johanna had gone she wiped her gold-rimmed glasses, shut and locked the door, and straightened her curls, which were always "wiry" in spring time, as she expressed it.

"Father has had his fifteen minutes," she said impatiently, after satisfying herself with her toilet. "I must have an hour to-day, as Father Erb will see Gretchen for the first time."

At this instant Gretchen came in the front

door with Johanna, red and panting, following after.

"Father Erb is here," Miss Mina said severely. "Stop laughing and assume as much dignity as is possible. Fix your hair at the mirror. I have no time to wait for you to go upstairs."

Gretchen obeyed mechanically, tossing her fuzzy forelock to the opposite side and jerking on her hair-band with vigor.

"Now come," said her aunt pettishly. "Come in here with me."

As soon as they had entered the room Miss Mina gave a sharp cough, which made the Colonel's chair creak in the next room, this being the signal for Father Erb's dismissal. In a moment the door opened and Father Erb entered on tiptoe.

"This is my brother's child," Miss Mina said peevishly. "She is an orphan now, so will henceforth make her home with us."

"Indeed," said Father Erb, eying Gretchen carefully. "She is unlike your family I should judge."

"Oh, yes—oh, quite. She's like her mother's people, whom I don't know."

"She is about sixteen?" Father Erb continued, holding his eye-glass to his eye. "I shall put her in Miss Schmidt's Bible class, and she may take charge of the altar coverings."

"You are indeed kind," Miss Mina said sentimentally, drawing up her eyebrows. "Do you realize these honors, Gretchen?"

"I am afraid I do not," she replied, gazing out of the window wistfully, "and furthermore I don't think I ever will, for I refuse to go into Miss Somebody's Bible class, and decline the position of altar caretaker."

"Oh, but child," Father Erb said in horror. "You are refusing a sacred office when you refuse to be assistant sacristan to your aunt and the church. It is impossible! You are too young to decide for yourself. You must bide by our word for at least five years to come, and then you may be able to decide for yourself."

"My mother once decided to let me decide for myself," she said, looking at him fixedly, "and I intend to do so for the next five hundred years."

Father Erb was speechless and made a movement to Miss Mina to be speechless also. Thus all three sat in silence, Gretchen gazing from the window. At last, however, this became unbearable, and Miss Mina, looking pleadingly at her superior, introduced her usual Bible discussion, or rather percussion, as she was set in her way of thinking and he in his, and each bent on upsetting the other. They first discussed the Garden of Eden. She declared it was in India

near the Ganges, and he, with charts and map, tried to prove that it was in the Caucasus.

"And I am convinced of this," he added emphatically, "for I have lately studied the languages."

"But I need no languages to convince me," she retorted, "for the Holy Spirit is my teacher, and it says the Garden of Eden is in India on the Ganges."

Father Erb then labored to explain how the Holy Spirit taught through the eye, ear, and mind, but Miss Mina would not be converted, so he changed the subject. "What is to be the color of the banner?" he inquired without pause.

"White and gold," she replied with decisiveness.

"Well, I prefer red; a dark crimson."

"Well, as I am working it, I intend to put in white and gold."

"What would you suggest?" he said in desperation, turning to Gretchen.

"Something like nature," she replied, turning from the window. "Say a green ground with a single Calla or Easter lily upon it."

"Indeed," sniffed her aunt. "Don't display your ignorance of holy colors."

"You must certainly study your church," the clergyman added with gravity, "for the holy con-

firmation comes in the fall and you are indeed weighed and found wanting at the present moment."

"Yes," said Gretchen slowly, "I kick the beam with you." Whereupon the reverend Peter would have smiled had not his eye caught that of his incensed fiancée, Miss Mina.

"Leave the room," she said to Gretchen, biting her words. "Leave this room."

"I will gather you some marigolds for your altar," Gretchen said to Father Erb as she passed out. "They are very beautiful just now."

"Thank, thank you," he stammered in surprise. "But I, I think best to have flowers not picked with polluted hands in my holy precinct."

"As you wish," she replied with burning heart. "Good-morning."

"A peculiar child," Father Erb said to Miss Mina when Gretchen had gone. "She seems wise and yet foolish."

"Bubbles often reflect the color about them," she snapped.

"Ah, I comprehend!" he exclaimed, "I comprehend, my dear!"

Then followed a low, religious conversation; a creed coquetry in which the heart was closely examined and confessions exchanged.

"Oh!" gasped Johanna, coming to the door with Johann. "Back, man, back," at which Miss Mina, by a telepathic shock, felt their presence and rose confusedly, bowing coldly to her blushing lover.

Johanna re-entering the room with Johann, gazed upon the preacher, and this good man, though used to female adoration, was uncomfortable beneath her gaze, for she was a very fire of adoration.

"So you have seen the young hornet," she said, clasping his hands. "She can fly high and sting deep, can't she?"

"I can't say," he replied, stroking his beardless chin. "She is certainly unlike the Glebe family."

"Oh, bless you, no. She's like her father's folk. A Glebe over and over. Why, her mother was as gentle a creature as I ever laid eyes on. She was as mild as a south breeze, and sat all day in her garden smelling herbs and honeysuckles."

"Indeed."

"Why, bless you, Johann can stand by me in sayin' it, she's a chip of the old Colonel, a regular big sliver, and he knows it."

"And how is Johann?" Father Erb said, interrupting Johanna. "I hope not ailing any?"

"No, sir, tolerable to-day," Johann responded mildly. "As tolerable as I can be under the circumstances of goin' to hell."

"Going to hell!" the good clergyman said mystified. "What do you mean?"

"You see," broke in Johanna, "it's just this way. I told him that if he didn't stop the gin, he'd go faster than he were already."

"That isn't much to set a feller right, is it?" Johann questioned.

"No, indeed," Father Erb continued, turning to Johanna. "You must not be such a can-vasser for hell. I hear you advertise the devil so much the folks know more of him than they do of the Lord. Be wise, my good woman, and talk of heaven more."

"Well, I s'pose you do sympathize with Johann being a man, and perhaps like addicted."

"Johanna!"

"I mean like tempted."

"Rather. We are all tempted. The angels were before us," Father Erb said, cooling. "Temptation is a wise provision of the Lord."

"But the way he persists in the gin," Johanna continued. "A man can't go two ways at once, and it's no use disputin' where he's off to now. His face is set for the dark door as sure as I'm a livin'."

"Try reading Revelations to him," the parson suggested. "Maybe it would help him."

"Well, to oblige you, sir, but not because he deserves it. Johann, go and fetch the holy word and let the preacher mark the place."

"No, no," the good man said, rising. "I must hurry away. I have another call to make."

"I'll be bound he's off to the Misses Zoellner," Johanna said, following him to the door. "He's mighty fond of their tea and smilin'. No, he's gone into the corner store. He's gone to see the old Abbot. Poor old creature," she added sympathetically. "He's nigh killin' himself with that debt. The Master should let him off now he's so old, for he's killin' himself by inches, savin' and scrimpin'. He nigh starved the young boy. That he did. The master ought to let him off, he ought. Johann," she called, turning round, then exclaimed, seeing Gretchen near, "My gracious, missus, I've let it out. Did you hear what I just said?"

"Where is Johann?" Gretchen replied with pretended innocence. "I have been hunting for him a long time."

"Like he's gone to the gate with the preacher," Johanna said with great relief. "It allers splits me up when I see how he hank-

ers like after him, and he don't see that it's a sinner hankerin' that should be shunned."

"Don't scold him," Gretchen said playfully. "He's a meek, kind husband."

"No more, no less," Johanna said, raising her eyebrows. "S'pose that's enough though."

CHAPTER VI.

GOETHE.

THE Abbot, though still engrossed in his books, and though still seen upon his favorite barrel, missed Karl greatly. All who saw him during the first week of his loneliness would not have detected anything, for he took pains to wear his old, hard expression in order to deceive them, and to try and deceive himself. But, alas, one sharp eye noticed that he sat himself wearily upon his keg, forgetting his old-time spring, and that there was a peculiar moisture over his eye when he bargained with the coal-oil peddler or the tallow merchant. Why did he bargain? Was there anything to save for now? No, the debt was collected, and enough money hid in the seat of the old chair to bury him. What else? Why did he bargain or buy at all? Still he went on bargaining and beating as if a family's bread depended on it.

There was one thing, however, that made his sunken eye light, and that was the row of new frame houses being built to the east. Waterloo

was spreading its wings, and he knew exactly how many nails each house and roof would take, and how many pennies his coffer would claim in exchange. How his dull eye shone as he brushed the cobwebs from the back window, and how it winked unconsciously at this prosperity.

This evening, the seventh since Karl had left, the Abbot seemed more lonely than usual, for he could not read, and shunned his beloved keg-top.

Moving into the inner room he stood before the picture in the little black frame, the first time for years. At first the tears came to his eyes, then, as certain pictures crossed his brain, their expression grew set and he frowned.

"A lily full of poison," he said, full of suppressed fire. "A pure white lily with a poisonous petal." And so saying he turned the face to the wall and gazed sullenly at its dark cardboard back.

"Nectar, nectar, ambrosia!" he exclaimed, suddenly turning to the shop-door. "Ambrosia. Spring tonic!" And taking a bottle from the shelf beneath the counter, he drank from it deeply.

"Nectar, drink for gods and men," he said, smacking his lips. "Ah, what's that shining in the light like a ruby?" His eye had fallen

upon the little red volume of Goethe's poems
Gretchen had given Karl for him.

Opening the book he read:

“To my venerable neighbor,
Martin Kranz, from Gretchen Glebe.”

“Martin Kranz? Yes, here he is. Martin Kranz, old boy, Martin Kranz, young boy!”
“Goethe,” he continued with increasing jollity.
“Guess I remember you, Goethe. Remember, you breaking your young heart over a certain dame. Remember how her eyes bulged and how your heart bulged too and burst. Don't remember you, eh? Me, Martin Kranz, the pill peddler, don't remember you? You, the devil's peddler, writing Faust and selling Marguerite. 'Tis a pity love didn't season you sooner, for you seasoned the ground the sooner for her. Faust! Faust! Marguerite! Ah, Gretchen Glebe, the beautiful Marguerite!”

At the last words Gretchen entered the door, and the shop-bell, like a judgment gong, straightened the Abbot. Gretchen stood smiling at him with a peculiar tremble on her lips. She saw there was something wrong.

“Ambrosia, food for gods,” he said, lifting up the book. “Listen, and I will read you Faust.”

Gretchen was silent and listened to a jargon of words, the like of which she had never heard

before. When he had finished he went to a box and said, "Like to see a young Faust or maybe Mephisto," and he handed her a picture, old and faded, of himself.

"That was this man when he got married," he continued, reseating himself. "When he won his wife from the old gent, the rich gent, your grandsire. My, how he stamped and swore when he found it out; found he had lost her. He swore in his deepest throat he'd cut mine in two. He had money and I had my face, but I won. Then we got married, Nell and me, and came to this country. Soon he came out after us with his wife and built that big place across from mine to keep the sun off my Nell. And he did. She pined away, and every time she saw his lady drive out in her chaise she sighed and pined still more. Then he took pity on her in her poverty and lent her gold and gave me lots, saying he'd plenty, and that I was to give her all she pleased. I, to satisfy her, took it all, and after that she died; and before she lay cold in her grave he sent me in his bill. That was his revenge. He cut my life in two by starving me, but I swore by her grave I'd pay it back, and the sock's nigh full." Here he paused and produced the gray sock, counting the gold into little piles on his knee.

Gretchen, seeing this opportunity to slip away,

moved to the door, and passed out unknown to the Abbot.

Taking the side-path she sought the maples, a favorite place where she had often sat and listened to the silken leaves as they soothed her with their soft caressings of each other.

"I know it all," she whispered. "I must beg the grandsire to let him off, or he will die as Johanna said." And as she recalled her grandfather's action she looked at the big house with horror. It had become a tomb, a tomb over the grave of Karl's mother. But as she gazed at the mansion her eyes unconsciously sought the sky above, which was blue and sparsely sprinkled.

"Beautiful blue," she murmured, "so vast and blue. The home of souls and spirits. Perhaps at this moment the soul of my mother looks down upon me from God's clear horizon, and the spirit of my father watches over my turbulent life."

Here words failed her and the spirit took up her prayer. Alas, there were those who said she never prayed; her aunt and even the good pastor. How feeble they were to discern.

"Gretchen," said a voice behind her, "are you here alone at this hour?"

"Not alone, grandsire. The leaves keep me delightful company."

He gazed at her face and sat down, unable to explain what he saw written there.

"Who is the old Abbot," she said, changing the theme. "I feel very sorry for him."

"Pshaw. Don't waste your sympathy. He does not want it. He's an old miser who starved his wife to death."

"I don't think he is rich now," she persisted. "He says he is saving every thaler to pay a large debt he owes."

"Tut," the Colonel replied angrily, "he'd best pay it then and have done, but I won't have him telling you his woes. Go no more to see him, remember. It's no place for you."

"Oh, my grandsire," she implored. "He does not gossip; he only tells me for information. He teaches me many things and gives me all the news."

"Darn your stockings, say your prayers, and read the commandments. That's enough for a woman."

"Oh, my grandsire, I want to know the world that I may see my mission and do some good. I don't want to sit still all my life and do nothing. I want to work."

"Pshaw! There's plenty of work in the house, and that's the woman's sphere!"

"Her sphere is set from above. No man or woman can tell her it is not."

"Some of his twaddle, I suppose," the Colonel said, rising angrily. "Remember, you do not go there again."

When she returned to the house, Johanna met her at the door.

"The master's stamping and very angry," she exclaimed, "and your aunt has prostrations all because of you. Because that young man wrote to you. Go! Gretchen trembled slightly as she entered her grandsire's room, but felt more assured when she saw the letter lying before him, and saw him contemplating it with calm face. He was pale, so she knew what Johanna had said was true, but that now the storm was over and he was quite himself.

"Gretchen," he said, seeing her in front of him, "here is a letter. Let it be the last. The last, remember."

She took it, inclining her head to him, and silently left the room. As she suspected it was from Karl, and truly like him, full of unselfish requests for her to be kind to his sire.

"He really cares for him then," she said, folding the letter. "He hints that he forgets himself when lonely. Probably drinks and gets drunk." And with sudden light she realized that this had been the cause of the Abbot's strange mood. He never alluded to himself,

but she felt that every word was full of pain. He was probably homesick.

"What shall I do!" she exclaimed, lying down on the bed in her room. "He begs me to go, and my grandsire forbids me. Oh, what shall I do?"

Full of weariness and distress she closed her eyes, to keep the tears back.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SUNSHINE SOCIETY.

FOR many days Gretchen kept away from the Abbot and the little store. It was a constant trial to her to do so, but she realized that her grandsire meant what he had said.

During these days of her isolation she thought much of Faust and the Abbot's revelation, and became so interested in Goethe, she secured a copy of his works from Father Erb. From Marguerite she first learned the possibility of woman's depravity and the misery of her fallen estate. Indeed her heart bled oftentimes for Marguerite and all unfortunates, and her pity was unabated. Gradually this pity grew from an embryo into a plant, and this plant bore the perfect flower of charity. At first it was a mist-like blossom, but gradually it had become tinged with pink, with life blood, for it grew with her from hour to hour.

Walking in the pines one Sunday afternoon, a month after she had walked with Karl, she was seized with a sudden soul-longing to do and to be. Her spirit was in travail and she sat

down in pain. Near her ran a little woodland brook, and unconsciously she turned to it as it was alive and moving. "Have you any message?" she whispered. "Can you tell me what I must be? And in the silence she discerned a small voice saying, "be as I."

"Yes," she said, realizing the significance of it, "I must have my spirit as clear as your waters, and I must flow as you, among the sere souls of earth to refresh them."

Then it seemed the seed of her aspiration had been sown, for she sighed saying, "Now I know."

"A butterfly," she continued after a pause. "He's after the marigolds. Yes, there he goes, and now is sitting on the petal of one. You'll not get honey there, pretty one, but perhaps you're just out for a lark."

She had scarcely spoken when a piece of rotted bark fell from a tree overhead into the stream. "Oh!" she exclaimed, seeing it fall. "It must have fallen on him." And truly the beautiful creature was dead, floating down the stream with the broken flower.

"Like life," she whispered unconsciously. "Who knows how many fall in this way? How many die among the marigolds, thinking no harm?"

Leaving the wood, she plucked a bright jon-

quail and put it in her hair, singing to herself the little song, "My Yellow Jonquil." In this happy mood she reached home, and saw the Colonel taking his usual sunset stroll. He was evidently in deep thought, for his head was bent. She did not want to disturb him so slipped by, as she thought, unnoticed.

"A new place for jonquils," he said kindly. "I think I shall have those woods transplanted and then you will stay at home."

"Oh, that would not do," she replied, kissing his hand playfully. "Shall we go to church to-night?"

"No, I think not. Your aunt and Johanna are both busy. They are having a meeting of the Sunshine Society in the house now."

"A meeting?"

"Yes, the Sunshine Society."

"What does it meet for?"

"Someone's sick, I suppose. They always meet to arrange who shall nurse the sick one."

"Do you know who is sick?"

"The old Abbot," he replied shortly.

"The Abbot? Oh, I must go and see him. Karl asked me to. I must go this time."

"Nonsense," said her grandsire, detaining her. "You must not."

"Oh, please?"

"Silence!"

So Gretchen, restrained, and chafing at the restraint, returned to the house with her grand-sire. The Sunshine Society was still in session and she heard Johanna say, "He's very bad, for Jeremy says his bitters don't affect him, and that's a bad sign. Besides that he's allers callin' for Karl and our Miss Gretchen, and sayin' somethin' queer about ghosts or somethin'."

"No more details," Miss Mina interrupted. "Let the meeting adjourn."

One by one the women streamed past Gretchen, and last of all came Johanna, who exclaimed, at sight of her, "he's allers cryin' for you, child."

"Be quiet," said Miss Mina. "Have you no sense?"

"Come upstairs and tell me," Gretchen whispered. "I want to hear all about him."

"They don't want you to know," Johanna panted, reaching the top step. "But I'll just tell you he calls for you all the time, and talks about Karl."

"I must read him Karl's letter," she replied. "He would like it. It would soothe him."

"Mercy on us," Johanna exclaimed, holding her sides. "As if a letter'd sooth the deliriums."

"Well, let me see him then. Get me over some way, do."

At these words her aunt appeared suddenly, and Johanna squatted on the floor in search of something she had dropped.

"Go at once," she said sharply. "Johann is waiting, and the man may be dead while you sit about."

"Yes, miss," Johanna said, rising and forgetting the imaginary thing she had lost, "Johann has patience, but I must attend the sick, as I'm takin' your honorable place."

This was news to Gretchen. Evidently the lot had fallen to her aunt, but she, being an enemy of the old man, had appointed Johanna. She smiled scornfully at her aunt, who noticed her expression and ordered her to bed.

During the night Gretchen dreamed of the pines, Marguerite, the Abbot, and Karl. The latter she saw in great agony on the battle-field. He had been wounded. She searched for his wound, but strangely enough there seemed to be none. Then she kissed his pale, silent lips and slowly he opened his dark, melancholy eyes and looked at her, murmuring, "Gretchen, my love." In some mysterious way she kissed him back to life, and he was able to rise up and to carry her off the field.

She awoke with the words, "Gretchen, my love," in her ears, and the thought of Karl's sad eyes on her mind. Half awake she stared at

the gray light just beginning to come through the window and murmured, "a monk."

Fully awaking some moments later, she rose and looked out of the window. She had no particular reason for it, but was glad when she saw the quiet garden with the fields beyond, instead of the bloody field of her dream. The soft twitter of birds came to her and not the hiss of shells; the sweet odor of the earth instead of the smell of hot blood.

"War in the beautiful garden of earth!" she exclaimed. "How horrible!" And she shivered as she thought of such butchery in the very lap of life.

"Up already!" said a voice at the door. "Don't make a sound, for the grandsire's had a bad night. Your aunt says he didn't sleep a wink all night."

"Gracious," said Gretchen, not sure whether she should say she was sorry or not. "Tell me how the Abbot is."

"He's better, but talks about you all the time," Johanna said, moving toward the bed.

"I will go over and read him this. Wait for me."

"Disobedience leads to disgrace," the good woman said against her will. "You had best stay where you are."

"Oh, I must go, Johanna, wait for me just a moment."

Gretchen reached the shop before Johanna, and went in softly to the old man's bed.

"I am Gretchen," she said, looking into his face. "Don't you know Gretchen?"

"Gretchen," he muttered, opening his eyes wider, "Gretchen?"

"Yes, Gretchen Glebe."

"You—you—take," he said with difficulty, "take——"

"I have a letter from Karl," she said, trying to turn his attention. "I will read it to you."

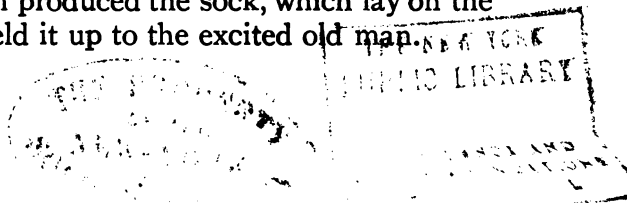
"You—take that—that—that," he continued excitedly, "that," and he pointed toward the door with his thumb.

"He wants somethin'," Johanna said. "Try lookin' about, and maybe he will tell you when you strike the right thing."

She tried Johanna's suggestion, feeling everything and turning to the Abbot to see if this or that was what he wanted. At last she neared the door and touched the chest, at which he uttered a low guttural sound.

"That's it," Johanna exclaimed. "Open the lid."

Gretchen produced the sock, which lay on the top, and held it up to the excited old man.



"Take—take to—to Colonel Glebe," he said, nodding his head frantically. "Take—to—Colonel Glebe."

"It's money," Gretchen said, hesitating.

"The money he owes the old Colonel," Johanna added. "Take it; never dispute a dying command. See, he's fallen back. Run and give it to him before he dies, or you'll have bad luck."

Gretchen found her grandsire pale and irritable looking. "Here's something for you," she said, gently, pushing open the door at his request. "The old Abbot sent it."

"The old Abbot," the Colonel exclaimed, starting. "What is it?"

"It's an old gray sock full of gold."

"Full of gold? Let me see the gold."

Gretchen held the sock while the old man examined the top coins. "Put it in that drawer," he said, pointing to his desk, "and lock the drawer."

Gretchen obeyed, fearful lest he should question her further and perhaps detain her, but he only sighed and kicked off his night-slippers into the corner, calling for his day-shoes.

"Did you lock it up?" he asked, taking the shoes from her hand. "Well, leave it there, and leave me alone."

CHAPTER VIII.

"THE CIDER CELLAR."

AFTER much creaking and shifting of sails, rolling and shifting of cargo, the vessel on which Karl sailed arrived at London. It was a merchant vessel and carried a badly packed cargo, which made the trip more hazardous and exciting than even his imaginative brain had pictured it, and so he was not sorry to shake himself, pull down his tight leggings, and step on something as solid as the London wharf. His carpet-bag was slung over his shoulder. This being his only care, he waited at leisure for the Captain, whose kindness he wished to acknowledge. As he stood in the dusk of the July afternoon, he looked paler than usual; indeed, had almost a death-pallor on his face. The trip had seasoned him hardly and taken the spirit out of him. He stood silently contemplating the ship, whose creaking sides and groaning mastheads had caused him to quake so many days and nights. It seemed miraculous that he had not been swallowed up in such a clumsy craft.

The Captain came to the side of the vessel just as the bells in the church near by were striking six. He did not see Karl, and the boy was too sensitive to call him, being sure that the tars around would mimic him. He fixed his eyes magnetically upon him, however, and, turning at length, the Captain spied him and called out: "Kranz, old chap, hold on a bit."

Karl needed no invitation. He would have held on for any length of time for this man Jennings. Being of broad build and very muscular, the Captain had won Karl's admiration and then his affection.

"I didn't see you get off," Jennings said, good-naturedly, but with a haughty air. "How did you climb down? You have more backbone than I thought. Most people are choked with fear while performing the same feat;" and he glanced at the vessel as he spoke, with no small pride.

"I always find a way when I want one," Karl replied, with boyish good-humor. "You said something about dining with me to-night. Have you changed your mind?"

"So I did," Jennings replied, with hesitation. "But I can't; I'm too busy."

Karl seemed somewhat disappointed and looked around at the dull, gray mass of wood and stone before him with melancholy eyes.

Jennings noted this and slid down the rope to clap him on his shoulder and cheer him.

"Don't be a baby," he said, laughing. "Go to 'The Cider Cellar,' and perhaps I will come after you later. Get up there as soon as you can and fill up. You must be weak." Thus concluding, he shouted to a sailor near by about a certain barrel of molasses, and disappeared behind a growing wall of boxes, kegs, and barrels.

Karl sighed as he disappeared and once more gazed at the dull, uninteresting mass before him. "'The Cider Cellar,'" he repeated, after a long pause. "I wonder if I have the paper with the street and number." He rummaged in his deep coat pocket, and after a moment pulled out a scrap of blue paper, on which he found the desired address. He had not much money, so decided to walk. His legs, indeed, felt wiry, but a walk would put life into them, so he started off, casting another glance at the ship, whose upper deck still showed above the barricade of boxes.

The road and narrow alleys were quite dark when Karl reached them and his bag began to grow very heavy, but nevertheless he noted the newness of the surroundings and his heart grew lighter, as he became aware of the novelties about him. The dwellings and shops were only half lit, but the faces under the street-lamps

were brighter and revealed features new and interesting to him. Here he saw an old, coarse woman, with protruding underlip and heavy jaw, who was looking into a beer-jug to see if her two pence were safe. There a thin, boyish face with red nose and eyes, and a smaller boy who counted out pennies in papers upon the pavement. Two children were squabbling about a red rag, which one had tied on for a neck-scarf, and a crumpled old man swore gruffly at the cramps in his hip, as he leaned up against the front of a gin shop and smelled his only medicine. All of these Karl watched with interest. Thus it was little wonder that he heard the bells strike the three-quarters as he passed only the third alley-way. He now became confused and inquired of an urchin the direction to "The Cider Cellar." The urchin, wise beyond his years, directed him, putting great emphasis on the word Cider.

Reaching the inn, Karl was shrewd enough to leave his bag at the door and to approach the house with as much dignity as his weary body could muster.

The host, hearing his name, called from the door, pushed through the circle of wine-bibbers, and gazed at him, inquiring his wants with mingled politeness and haughtiness.

On hearing that he was to serve in Lord Rey-

nolds' division of the army, his haughtiness gave way to meekness and he ushered Karl into a narrow, dingy corner-room, bowing him to a small table, and promising to show him to his room as soon as he was ready. Karl thanked him, seating himself before the table, and then beckoned to the dull-looking waiter in the corner.

"A good bit of rare beef and a bottle of ale," he said, pulling his coat-tail to wake him up. "Good hot beef, and good strong ale." He wondered at himself for making so bold, and could not understand how he had so emphatically ordered strong ale. Thinking of Gretchen, he sat with his chin in his hand and sighed wearily. Soon the waiter returned, and, placing the things before him, watched him with surprise as he ate the meat and drank the ale within five seconds. "A second," Karl said, holding out the mug, and the waiter bowed. "A third," he ordered, having consumed this, and wiping his lips vigorously. The waiter bowed still lower, awed by the extent of his capacity. Bow bells then rang the third hour, and Karl left the room in search of his quarters for the night. Locking the door, he sat down heavily and in a few minutes dozed.

"Some one down-stairs," called Ben, knocking at the door as if he thought the inmate dead.

At the summons Karl started and opened the door, reading from a card in Ben's hand, "Walter Wrenn Jennings."

"Yes, yes," he said, with boyish delight. "Tell him I will be down in a minute."

He found Jennings seated in the front parlor, smoking a cigar, and greeted him warmly, but with a shyness unusual to him.

"Been at the beer," Jennings said, not rising and gazing at him in a fatherly fashion. "Look out; it runs like water in war time, for everybody is down in the mouth and purse, and it's as cheap as water."

"I had some," Karl replied, offhand, "but not enough to even make me jolly."

"Perhaps too much to make you jolly," Jennings suggested. "Never mind; take this cigar. It will do your heart good, for it cost one shilling seven pence."

"Phew!" Karl exclaimed. "I don't smoke much, but I won't miss a bouncer like this."

"Then we will go to the theatre," Jennings said, puffing his second cigar. "It's too dull here."

"The theatre!" said Karl, surprised. "What is that?"

"O innocence! Come and I will show you. I didn't tell you the news," he continued, after a pause. "I am going to Waterloo."

"To Waterloo!" Karl exclaimed, moving awkwardly toward him. "What's up?"

"Nothing's up. Something's down. The ship's sprung a leak, has to go on dry dock, so I am going on dry land for a while. I will have no trouble in getting in, for I know old Reynolds' son and my navy record will help me. Any way, I am as good as six of you. Don't waste that cigar. Give it to me if you don't want to smoke it," for Karl was spellbound and held the precious cigar upside down in his fingers.

"That's good news," he said, handing the cigar to Jennings. "Far better than your cigar." At which Jennings laughed and scrutinized him.

"What time does the ship sail to-morrow?" he inquired, puffing the cigar vigorously. "I will have to stay here all night. Can you foot the bill for two?"

Karl looked doubtful and shook his head, for he knew he had barely enough to pay for himself, at which Jennings laughed, saying he'd make enough to pay for a dozen within half an hour.

Leaving Karl, he stalked into the bar, called for a fellow to throw dice with, and then settled down to hard work.

"I'm no chump, see!" he exclaimed, return-

ing to Karl after he had made three pounds. "Got another fellow to back me for a shilling and skinned this off besides the shilling."

Karl looked up from his book with a bewildered expression on his face.

"Oh, let that book alone!" Jennings exclaimed, impatiently. "Poetry, of all doses! You're mooney, all right; but come, have an eclipse with another wench as bright as she, and then it'll be dark and you'll forget her."

Karl was still more bewildered, but followed Jennings into the hall.

"Wake up!" his companion shouted, shaking him. "We're going to the theatre, man! Wake up!"

To Karl's further bewilderment, Jennings next called a cab.

"We'll do it up brown," he said, shoving Karl in. "Drury Lane, driver, as fast as you can go."

As the two young men walked down the aisle to prominent seats, many persons fixed their glasses upon them, for they were late, and, as far as personal appearance went, very good-looking and attractive. Karl bent his head in an embarrassed manner, but Jennings enjoyed it, holding his higher than usual.

"There's peaches and cream for you," he

said, poking Karl. "Look to the right—see those lips and blue eyes."

But Karl was intent on the stage and did not look as directed.

"Look around, dummy," Jennings continued, in a few moments. "There's a wench tearing her head off staring at you round her fat father."

"That's fine!" Karl exclaimed, not hearing his companion. "Look at the expression on the witch's face!"

"There's another face bewitching me," Jennings drolled, casting a glance sideways. "It's in the second box."

"My, you are swift!" Jennings said, pushing him out of the door when it was over. "You will set the world on fire some day. Good-by. I'm after my witch. You know the way. Good-by!"

Karl would have stopped him if he could, for such conduct seemed horrible to him and he wanted to keep his idol spotless; but, alas, he was only Kranz, Jennings' puppet, as he was often called.

Turning around, he noticed that the fog had cleared and that the stars were as bright as at Waterloo. Curiously enough, the dipper began to dance in the sky as had the girls on the stage, and Mars came marching as a monarch toward his queen, the lovely Venus.

"A grand stage," he said to himself, walking slowly on. "I should like to write for a stage like that." And gradually within him, as he kept this thought in mind, arose the desire to do something great.

CHAPTER IX.

MERRY ENGLAND GROWN SAD.

THE following morning a thick, yellow mist enveloped "The Cider Cellar" and the whole of London. Karl felt smothered as he put his head out of the latticed window to see if there were any signs of clearing, and told his companion, in choked tones, that they were buried alive. Whereupon Jennings grunted, too much buried in his sleep to comprehend anything outside that tomb. Noting this, Karl felt sick at heart and sat down on the window-sill wearily.

"The hours are like millstones around one's neck," he exclaimed several times. "I suppose they will be worse if this fog doesn't clear. No vessel could cut through it."

"Millstones," Jennings said, yawning. "Milestones, you mean. Oh, I am so sleepy! Go to sleep, Karl, and don't fuss me."

Karl was silent and the room was still. For the first time in his life he longed for the clink of nails and screws. At last, unable to bear it longer, he drew on his topboots and left the

room, Jennings swearing at him for banging the door.

Karl was not used to such swearing, for this man Jennings had a vocabulary of oaths in every language, but he excused him, knowing he was a seaman. Indeed, he would have excused him no matter what he did, so fascinated had he become.

Reaching the barroom, which had been so gay but a few hours previous, he saw the spattered counter with its empty glasses and the chimney-corner with two sleeping loafers, who snored loudly.

The room was full of grayness, no longer full of gayness. The crimson wines had gone with the stars, leaving the glasses as gloomy as the sky.

"I'll try the street. May be someone will be out there," he exclaimed, pushing open the door. "This is a terrible hole."

He wandered up the street aimlessly until he came to a group of men who were watching a blackboard.

"Here's a Cannuck," one of the fellows exclaimed as Karl approached.

"Look at his half Hessian, half cowboy boots and his tight breeches."

He was angry at the Cockneys and would have retorted if the men had not turned to read the new writing on the board.

"What does it mean?" he asked an old man near.

"Oh, Merry England's now grown sad," the old man said, with tearful eyes. "Napoleon's had a victory. Ah, it's sorry times, lad," he continued, wiping his eyes with a bandanna. "The heel of the hoppers is near our land. Pray that this man may be crushed. Do, lad. If I were young I'd fight 'em, but I'm not. I've had my day. Now I can only read them boards and fight 'em in my mind."

"I'm going to the war," Karl said, with boyish pride.

"You!" a thin man said, turning on his heel. "You'll make good mincemeat for the crows." And he spat on the ground before Karl.

"Another message," he said, wheeling around again and reading:

"Lord Reynolds' regiment sails to-night at sunset. Recruits enter before noon.

"(Signed) REYNOLDS."

"Hard up for fellers, Ben," said a lanky youth, with his hands in his pockets, passing by. "Say we go?"

"Not fine enough for me," Ben said, mimicking Lord Reynolds' noted club foot. "His is a mixed swarm. I'll go with the blue bottles when I go."

"Guess I will, too," his companion said, pulling him off. "Come on, pal. Mamma's waitin' for her Johnnie."

This was all news to Karl. He learned here in the early morning his commander's appearance and the class of men with which he was booked. Neither impressed him favorably, so he returned to "The Cider Cellar" more gloomy than he had left it.

"By Jove, where have you been?" Jennings questioned, meeting him in the bar. "You look as tough as the deuce. I must buy an orange neckcloth to light up your muddy face."

"I'll have my uniform soon."

"Well, but we must go out now. Go down Piccadilly and see the girls, and I must get my entry card. See how I am slicked out."

"Where did you get the coin?" Karl ventured.

"O innocence! I won it last night when you were snoozing. I tell you I'm no slouch!"

"Who's that fellow with Captain Jennings?" a youth asked the bartender. "He over there near the door?"

"A Cannuck, they say round here," the polished-faced man replied.

"Ugly dog, any way. S'pose he isn't a friend of the Cap?"

"Seems like it."

"Jove, he's as sulky as a white parrot. Call him over here, boss."

The man blew between his fingers and Karl turned around.

"Here," he called; "you're wanted."

"Are you a Cannuck?" the slim youth asked.

"Yes," said Karl, shyly.

"Oh, then you're one of those chaps out there who was itching for a fight. I'll set you in the front line. Don't like that, don't you? Well, you must think we put ourselves cheap if we wouldn't put you Colonials in front. I'm Lieutenant Long, your superior. Salute, man!"

"You're Colonel Glebe's man," Lieutenant Long continued, taking a third glass.

"I did not know it."

"Then you're a fool. He sent your name to my Lord Reynolds, else you'd not been here. Think we can import beef for nothing? Well, I guess not. Go and fetch Captain Jennings."

Karl's ears tingled. He had not been used to such treatment and resented it, but his discretion bade him be quiet for once.

About noon Jennings hurried into the bar and flung Karl a bundle of clothes. "Dress up woolly," he said, breathlessly. "Inspection at two."

Karl picked up the clothes with tightening lips.

"You're the coolest I have struck," Jennings said, buttoning him up; "too cool for war."

"Perhaps it's all the better," Karl said, glancing at his black legs. "This looks like a funeral, Jennings."

"They want us properly dressed," he laughed, "so they won't have to redress us when they bury us."

This was indeed cheerful. Karl's lips quivered and his eyes filled in spite of his efforts to be brave.

"What's that infernal book, anyway?" Jennings said, tossing up a red-covered book. "You carry it around like a book of daily prayers."

"It's all right," Karl replied, tucking it into his coat. "I intend to carry it through thick and thin."

"S'pose Gretchen gave it to you," Jennings said, winking his eyes. "Forget her for about five minutes, do!"

At the inspection Jennings whispered to Long the secret of the book, and the latter was determined to make a joke of it. When he passed with Lord Reynolds he poked Karl's coat with his swagger stick and the book slipped to the ground. Of course, Karl grew very pale. He feared a rebuke.

"What's that?" Long shouted, pompously,

picking it up. "Let me see," Lord Reynolds said, taking it. "Very good; hand it back and give me that gentleman's name."

Lieutenant Long bowed and handed the book back, slapping his legs at thought of his frustrated plan.

After his dismissal he paid Karl great attention—in fact, took him under his wing, as he expressed it; but Karl kept faithfully to Jennings.

CHAPTER X.

FRAU CHRISTIANIA.

AFTER a tiresome march, a loathsome, crowded car, and stopping to be fed in a sour-beer shop, Karl with his regiment reached Brussels. He was weary and sick of it all, but at the same time interested in the new life he saw about him. Jennings and Long found their consolation in battering one another about the head and in lynching an imaginary Napoleon, and often tried to wake Karl up, as they said, by partially lynching him.

"How can I save life," Karl often asked himself, remembering his message to Gretchen, "with Long at my heels and Jennings beside me?" He took every opportunity, however, to inquire what happened when a comrade fell or when some one was shot near by.

"I'm going up to dine with Frau Christiania and my sister," Jennings said, looking at Karl's frugal repast. "Good-by, old chap. Have a good night, wherever they put you."

"Yes, yes," replied Karl, wistfully. "They'll put me in a tent or the barracks, I hope."

"Perhaps. If not, make the best of it."

Karl recalled Jennings's previous descriptions of his sister Delia and her mistress, fat Frau Christiania, as he sat waiting for the sergeant to finish his sandwich and beer. He pictured these two in his mind and imagined himself speaking to the elder about Fraulein, putting in a good word for her some way. He imagined he was received courteously by the Frau, for she had a great weakness for men in military clothes. He noted her stiff, yellow hair, heard her scold the youngest of her numerous offspring, and saw her stretch her good-sized arm at the youngest male who bellowed in the corner for "Delia," Janet-of-all-trades, quick messenger service, and carpet-sweeper combined.

"Order!" roared the sergeant, interrupting this picture. "Order! Attention!"

Jumping up, he got into file to pass out of the door where each was to get his billet.

"Man named Kranz here?" the sergeant bawled again. "Step out if he is." Karl, with fear in his eyes, left the file.

"My lord billets you at Frau Christiania's, who is the Dorcas of Brussels. See you acknowledge his attention."

"Yes, sir," Karl said, saluting and taking the paper.

"March!" he bawled, to the envious line. "You are dismissed, Kranz."

As Karl walked through the dim streets with their picturesque lamps, his heart beat with expectation and he thanked Gretchen with every breath for giving him the book that had been the cause of this distinction. As he moved under a light to make sure of the number on his card, two maids with dimpled chins smiled and said audibly, "Englander liebenswurdig," which made him smile in turn.

Walking on, he was surprised to see them follow him. Such a thing had never happened to him before. His feet flew over the cobbles, but theirs flew too. He turned up his coat collar, at which they laughed, and, thinking they had teased him enough, they turned on their high heels and scuttled away.

With beating heart he reached the massive door of Frau Christiania's house. The knocker was made of iron and fell like a thunderbolt.

"By George!" exclaimed Jennings, opening the door. "What brings you here?"

"My billet," Karl replied, breathing hard.

"Oh, my visitor!" Frau Christiania called from within. "Bring him quickly to me, Captain Jennings."

Karl entered and approached the elegant lady, who was barricaded by six men.

"Welcome, Mr. Kranz," she said, making a gap for him to enter. "These are my eligible

daughters, Karina, Fabrecca, Ettelka, and Anna."

Karl bowed and the four maidens curtsied very low.

"So you come from far-away America?" she continued. "Stand at my right hand. I always enjoy persons from afar off. You have great rivers there and large lakes?"

"Yes, we have a beautiful country," Karl replied, nervously. "America has many large lakes and rivers."

"Anna, my daughter, what is the hour of night?"

"Eight hours, mother," a meek voice replied.

"Then I must arise and clothe myself for the ball. You gentlemen do likewise. I will leave my door in one hour exactly. See to it none lag behind me. My daughters, carry my skirts."

Thus Frau Christiania swept away, followed by all but Jennings.

"She's a second Dorcas, all right, isn't she?" he laughed. "Come with me. Being her guest, you are entitled to a ticket for the ball."

Karl at first hesitated, but then, realizing what the dulness at home would be, with a possible Karina or Anna, he yielded and tagged Jennings up the stairs like a school-boy.

Being dressed in a short time, he returned to the hall to await her ladyship. As he descend-

ed the last two steps he beheld a small figure in gray, picking up scraps and straightening the chairs.

"This must be Delia," he said to himself. "Now's my time to speak to her."

"Captain Jennings's sister?" he said, simply. "I will introduce myself, as I am his friend Kranz."

"At your service, sir," she said, bowing and blushing. "This is a distinction."

"I am pleased to meet you," he said, pleasantly. "You are my friend for your brother's sake."

At this Delia opened her round blue eyes.

"Are you not coming with us?"

"Oh, Mr. Kranz, I am a servant!"

"You are a companion. You are a lady—you should go." He felt the injustice of her treatment. "I will ask Frau Christiania."

"Oh, please don't, Mr. Kranz. She would say I had coaxed you to, and scold me for a month after."

"But you must get tired here alone."

"I do. I often long to die, but then I can't leave, you know, for I've no place to go."

"Would you like to visit America? There's lots to do there."

"Oh, I should love it, but then it will never come to pass. I'll stay here until I go crazy and

then they'll put me in an institution. Oh, here is Lieutenant Long. Excuse me."

Long glanced angrily at Karl as he played with Delia's hair, while she with beseeching look talked to him. What she said seemed to displease him, so he brushed her aside and went over to Karl. Karl saw her wipe the tears from her eyes as she stooped to straighten the mat, and his feelings were stirred. He loathed the sight of Long, with his white face and pointed nose, and could scarce restrain himself from speaking. Frau Christiania then appeared with her eligible daughters, who brushed past Delia with the airs of duchesses.

"Mind you keep the door barred," Frau Christiania bawled to her, "and don't forget the cough syrup for Rupert. Now, gentlemen, we will proceed."

"I feel sorry for your sister," Karl said aside to Jennings. "You ought to help her out of that."

"She's wild and put herself in there, so she's got to get herself out," he replied, almost savagely.

"How'd you like to bring her to America after the war? I'll get her a berth there, and it would be a fine place for you."

"Not a bad idea," Jennings replied. "I'll go, by Jove, but not with her."

"Bring her, too," Karl said, indignantly. "I'll not get you a berth if you don't."

"Better marry her," he laughed, which made Karl's ears tingle. "She's not too bad."

"Now, gentlemen," Frau Christiania said, stopping the procession before a large illuminated building, "we are at the ball. See you break many hearts, but don't neglect my four eligible daughters and their mother."

CHAPTER XI.

WATERLOO.

A SEA of gaiety swept before Karl's eyes as he stepped on to the gallery above the ballroom. Gallants bent o'er fair ladies with high headgear, and the ladies, smiling, leaned forward to let them smell the perfume of the choice flowers at their breasts. Two here, two there, two everywhere, and red coats in and out as fireflies playing around daffodils.

The great Duke was in the midst of it, and, with his usual quiet manner, conversed with a lady of quality. His followers and under officers formed a circle around him, and in turn conversed quietly, almost solemnly; but the circle beyond this again was of waved lines, for the younger were full of spirits and conversed with their heads and fluttering fans. Beyond these were others, whose circle stretched into four points, the four corners of the room. Here the most glittering ladies reposed, like stars in the four corners of the sky, each having its separate solar system.

Then slowly the Duke turned as the music

began, and with him the circle slowly revolved; faster and faster they went, until even the stars in the corners were caught out of their hiding-places and thrown into the dazzling dance.

Following this was a minuet, in which Frau Christiania, in crimson satin, danced with the Duke. She was like an enormous red butterfly, and enjoyed being the centre of everything, just as one of those large butterflies enjoys it when it flaps its wings over a bluebell and refuses to let the smaller ones near the honey. The honey was the Duke, and how sweet he seemed to good Frau Christiania!

It was a joyous scene, in which no one was as yet oppressed by thought of war. The ladies in their bright gowns bent every effort to enchant their soldier escorts, whose uniforms made the picture one of dazzling beauty.

Suddenly, in the midst of the levity, something heavy fell with a thud. It was the sound of a cannon belching on the silent hills. In an instant the hall was as still as those hills in the dim moon.

The Duke pushed himself through the circles, and, without hat, started down the street toward the barracks. The soldiers followed, almost treading on their butterfly companions in their intense anxiety and haste. Frau Christiania, in great fright, called for her


daughters, saying their names in loud, brass-like tones. Lieutenant Long was seen to speak to her, but before he had said two words a second cannon sounded, and Jennings, pale as death, clutched his shoulder. What had made Karl stand still? Was he not a soldier? He suddenly realized that he was alone in the great gallery, and with a dizziness of head he descended the stairs.

"Come on," gasped Jennings, catching hold of his sleeve. "I've been looking for you. We marshal now and march in an hour."

Karl, with anxious face and wide eyes, followed him on a run. As he ran he saw a fan here, a glove there, a feather in the dust or fallen in the grass beside the cobble-stone walk, and foot-prints everywhere on the soft road, some small, some large, some spiked. The soldiers were evidently pouring in from different sides, for there, in front of the barracks, rows and rows were already in order, and some marching.

A third cannon sounded, whose roar tore through the city like a bolt of iron. This again increased the speed and excitement among the recruits, and if it had not been for the cool heads, like Karl's, there would have been a confusion hardly to be described.

"Boom! Boom! Boom!" came from the hills, until Karl's ears were booming. He was



faint and thirsty, but knew that if he lagged he would be swallowed in the lines and left alone in the road. He struggled bravely on and fell down, rather than lay down, when the order came for a halt.

The following day seemed a fearful dream. Corpses were carried hither and thither. Wounded men dangled over the backs of their comrades, and there was a hiss in the air like the hiss of a serpent's tongue. Some poor fellows were forced into the next life with curses on their lips, and some without a word.

"Stand close," Jennings whispered, hoarsely. "They're coming left flank. See that line there? They're wheeling round the curve in the hill. In a minute they will be here. Stoop down behind the gun."

Karl obeyed and bent down behind the ten-pounder just as a shell shrieked over his head.

"Near hit," Jennings said, with a terrified expression on his face. "Here they come!"

"Charge!" shouted the commander, and at the word they leaped up, running with their fellows across an open strip to a hillock behind which the tenth regiment was slowly advancing.

Here again they squatted down upon command and waited for the enemy.

"God!" cried Jennings, falling to one side, and Karl saw that he had been hit from the side.

Crawling to him, he heard him groaning, and his blood ran cold. He picked him up, a tremendous weight, and staggered a few yards back, then another few, and then to the foot of the hill they had just left.

By this time the columns were hand to hand and the shout and clash were horrible. Turning a second to see if his comrades were retreating or holding their own, he felt a sting in his left arm, then another in his side. He gasped as he fell beside Jennings in a swoon.

Coming to his senses, he found he was lying with Jennings on a blanket, the relief flag waving near him, and he knew what had happened.

"You saved me, old boy!" Jennings said, having come to himself an hour before. "The rest got slashed and every one that fell got trampled. Long's dead."

"Saved you?" Karl said, brokenly. "That's good," and he closed his eyes in a second swoon.

Jennings was shot in the thigh, but Karl in the arm and abdomen. The latter wound was serious and the surgeon looked grave when Jennings questioned him about his friend's condition.

"He pulled me off the hill half dead," he related to the surgeon. "I would be a corpse now if it hadn't been for him."

"Don't be surprised if he's one soon," the surgeon said, speaking his mind. "He's in a critical condition."

Jennings bent his gaze on the pale face beside him, and for the first time in his life realized what the lad's love had meant.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ABBOT AND HIS PRESS.

WHILE the younger Kranz was making his name in the large Waterloo, the older was making his in the small Canadian village.

Recovering from his illness with extraordinary rapidity, the old man seemed to take a new lease on life, and the Sunshine Society took the praise of the miraculous recovery to itself.

But Gretchen secretly surmised that the old gray sock had held the balm of Gilead. The Colonel now watched the old man, and to Gretchen's delight asked about him once.

It was now two full weeks since the Abbot had recovered, and everyone who spoke to him of his sickness seemed to him to have exaggerated the matter.

"Sick!" he said to Johanna, when she was telling him of his goings on. "Not me. I was just out on a dark road in my head. You or anyone can't swear I was trespassing on death's country. You Sunshine people aren't as bright as you sound."

At this Johanna yielded up the palm and

retired. Thus to all who had tended him kindly the old Abbot gave the same thanks.

Gretchen, however, learned from him that he had given her the sock with one guinea too little in it, and that he really must have been sort of sick to have done such a thing.

This evening, as she talked to him, the coach stopped and Gustav came clumping in with a letter.

"From the lad," he said, with a curious, bias smile. "Let's hear a bit o' what he says."

The old man examined the post-marks, saying, with satisfaction:

"He didn't get scared, after all. That's from Brussels. Read it, Missie Gretchen."

Gretchen took the letter and with moist eyes tore open the stained and greasy envelope, reading it as best she could, considering it had been written on the train.

"Interestin'," Gustav said, smacking his lips. "I hope he's alive and able to write another, at this 'ere minute."

"Will you let me show it to my grandsire?" Gretchen questioned the old Abbot. "I know it would interest him."

"No, no," the old man said, shaking his head. "Keep it secret."

"Well, good-day," Gustav said, banging the door. "Good-day."

"I'll show you another secret," the old man said, with a cunning look in his eyes. "Come in here. You know I've always been ag'in the government and I've always been going to tell them so, but I haven't had a proper tongue."

"A proper tongue?" Gretchen exclaimed.

"Yes, a proper tongue, for you know they have ears as don't hear like ours. They have to be talked to with a special kind of tongue. Here it is," he said, pushing open the door into the bedroom.

"A printing press!" Gretchen said, smiling. "How nice. What are you going to print?"

"Well, as I was saying, I'm going to talk to the Government. I paid dear to talk to 'em and I waited a long time, but I saved it with the other money and now I can talk."

"How will you talk?"

"Against the Government."

"Will you write a book?"

"No, no; a little paper to begin with, then a pamphlet, and then may be a book and a volume. Old Nick knows they need a library of such to move 'em."

"Yes," said Gretchen, awed by his vehemence.

"Now don't tell, whatever comes."

"Oh, no; I will never tell."

"Someone in the store," he said, covering it over. "Come out."

"Lord bless us," Johanna gasped, seeing Gretchen. "Why don't you take up your bed and live here?"

"I don't know," Gretchen said, laughing. "It's a very nice place, I think."

"Bah! You're disobedient. Give me a yard of wire, please, Martin Kranz. I'm in a hurry. Are you still better?"

"Never was worse and never was better," he muttered, measuring the wire.

"You disobedient girl!" Johanna said, ferociously. "I shall report you."

"Not to-night," Gretchen said, bounding out of the door and holding it. "Say you won't."

"Not if I die here."

"Say you won't."

"Not if I go to bone here."

The old Abbot looked on over the tops of his glasses, and seemed to enjoy Johanna's purple face and heaving breast.

"Let me out!" the good woman called, again dropping her wire. "The buns will burn!" And with this she sat down on the floor and wept.

Gretchen, very penitent and full of remorse, tried to comfort her, but to no avail. Johanna was like a rock from whence issued a spring of salt water.

Miss Mina passed by at this moment, and to Johanna's comfort she scolded Gretchen, whom

the old Abbot was giving little nervous pats on the back.

At Glebeholm she spread the tale of Johanna's woe to the Colonel. So Gretchen, as she feared, was called before him after supper.

"What do you mean by behaving so?" he said, severely, shutting the door. "Remember, you are only here on good conduct. One act more will put you in a convent in Quebec."

She moved uncomfortably, tears filling her eyes.

"You have a stain on your character already, left by your father. If you act this way you will deepen it. I have been disgraced enough. I will not be again if I can prevent it."

"I am sorry," she said, in a whisper. "I did not mean to hurt her feelings so."

The old man looked perplexed.

"Well," he said, seating himself, "your aunt says you have given her nervous prostration, but I confess you have helped to cure my nerves."

At this Gretchen's face lit up. She went to him, saying, playfully:

"I will be prim for your sake."

"No, not that," he said, with a sigh. "Only prudent, controlled, and gentle."

"You know I love you," she said, in a whisper. "I will be good."

"Come, come," he said, irritated by the word love. "This is child's talk. Remember what I said; that is enough."

Later on, as he was taking a little fresh air in the garden, he was surprised to see Gretchen sitting in the moonlight, among the maples. He stole up to her softly and was startled by the expression on her face, which was rendered the more death-like in the white light.

"Child," he said, softly, "what are you doing?"

"I am resting," she replied, gently.

"Go to bed if you are tired."

"The moon is so cool-looking it cools my head."

"Your head!" he said, with apprehension. "Are you feverish?"

"No, no. Only tired."

The following week the Colonel was pressing in his invitation for Gretchen to walk with him at a certain hour each day. She could not comprehend his meaning, but complied, the country at all times being attractive to her.

One day, as they passed the corner store, they noticed a group within and heard someone talking in a loud voice.

"What is the matter?" she said, pressing in. "What is the matter?"

"They arrested him," Nichol Schluz said,

with no little satisfaction. "They are going to put him in the lockup."

"The Abbot?" she exclaimed, pushing her way into the crowd, in spite of the men. "Oh, no."

"Keep back," said a stranger, in a deep voice. "He's been summoned to York."

"What for?" Gretchen asked, boldly.

"None of your affair," he said, gruffly.

"You can't take him," she cried, excitedly, running to his side. "Don't dare!"

The man laughed and her grandfather called her from without, but she was deaf to both.

"What's he arrested for?" she asked again.

"Writin' pamphlets ag'in' the Government," a second stranger replied.

"Well, it deserves it. Don't touch him, I say."

At this the largest man laughed and pulled the silent Abbot roughly to one side.

"You villain!" she said, snatching off his hat and pulling his hair. "Leave him alone!"

"Take that, hussy!" he said, knocking her on the head with his heavy hand; "and that, and another, and go home to your ma."

"Stop!" said the Abbot, between his teeth; but he was powerless to move, so the third blow fell, and Gretchen, dizzy, sank to the floor.

"The old Colonel's gal," someone whispered,

at which the men picked the Abbot up bodily and hurried him out the side-door.

"Your child is hurt," Nichol said to the Colonel without. "Come in."

"Bring her out," he said, setting his lips.

Nichol and two men carried Gretchen into the air, where they set her on the steps, and in a few seconds she revived and looked around anxiously.

"Where's the Abbot?" she said, in a whisper.

"He's gone," Nichol said, looking down the road. "They took him."

"To hell I hope," the old Colonel muttered under his mustache. When he saw that Gretchen had fainted, he swore this with all his soul.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GRAY SOCK.

FOR the next few days the little store was closed and the blinds drawn down. Just opposite, two smaller blinds were also drawn down and two eyes closed.

Gretchen, with head bandaged, lay still and pale upon the bed. The blows of the stranger, together with the scolding of her grandsire and aunt, had affected her brain. The York physician pronounced it brain fever.

"And all her pretty hair is to come off!" Johanna cried, wringing her hands. "All those black curls to be cut!"

And so, before a circle of friends, the curls fell. "The beautiful, black ringlets!" Johanna said, caressing her. "How soft and black!"

By the first of August, Gretchen, after three weeks' illness, was convalescent. Her grandsire was tender to her, and yet he still seemed to be angry. She could not guess what it was, but determined to ask him and to tell him what was on her mind.

"Grandsire," she said, one day, "are you still displeased with me?"

"Not you, child."

"Are you still displeased with the Abbot?"

"Don't ask me that."

"Won't you get him out of jail? I would be so happy if you would."

"Don't be foolish," he said, ignoring her pleading look and outstretched hand.

"I wouldn't let a villain knock my girl down, and not spite him by getting the old man out," Johanna ejaculated. "Think on that, Master."

The old man was silent.

"It's a shame," she continued, "to think of the ruffian goin' free, and that poor old feller in jail, when all he did was to write somethin', and that villain nigh killed some one."

This roused the Colonel's wrath. He was beginning to see it in a new light.

"Won't you get the old man out?" Gretchen said, seeing him waver.

"No! Once and for all, no!" And he left the room with a heavy step.

"Johanna," he called, presently. "Come here."

Gretchen listened and heard him speak to her in low tones.

"Just think," Johanna said, returning. "He says I can take this sock and try to get the old

man free with it. I'll send Gustav and Johann. Johann has a friend up there." And she added, in an undertone, "I guess he's been worritin' awful over it. I've seen him take it out, look at it, and put it away ag'in, and once I heard him say, 'Nell,' or some such name, and somethin' about duty. But don't look sorry. I'll send Johann off now to get Gustav, and we'll manage to get the old man out between us all, I know."

The Colonel, looking into the ripening fields, saw Johanna go out after Johann, who toiled faithfully as was his wont. It brought the tears to his eyes as he remembered how his wife had gone out to the fields in just such a dress as Johanna's. How he had protested about her wearing such plain things, about her going into the fields at all; but she had gone, silently and sadly, saying she loved the smell of the upturned furrow lands.

Then a second figure came to his mind, a beautiful, frail creature, sitting beneath a lace parasol in a small yard with no trees. The dandelions grew at her feet in disorder and her shoes were patched. Her dress was dainty, though it was faded, and her hands worked at a bit of delicate lace. This was Nell, the poor Abbot's wife.

The Abbot would often stand at his door and

look at her, and then walk bitterly away. Could these wives but have exchanged. And again the Colonel's eyes filled. Now they were gone—his wife and his idol. His enemy was in a dark cell, no doubt, and he shivered as he thought of him. He was in a soft chair, but cold at heart.

"I've got Johann and Gustav," Johanna said at the door, cheerily. "Have you any message?"

"No."

How it hurt him to say that "no," and yet it would have torn him more to have said yes. He had a hardened heart, but one with a warm core that every once in a while would burn, cool it as he would.

At the York barracks, meantime, the Abbot's heart, cold all through, had become stone; had become petrified. His confinement had been more than he could bear without becoming a hater of man, God, and the devil. He sat like a statue, knowing and seeing nothing.

"Come out," said the keeper, one day, shaking him. "Come out. Walk out."

"What for?" the old man asked, moving his stiffening lips for the first time in two weeks. "What for?"

"Hold your tongue!" the keeper said, grimly.

"You love liars round here," the Abbot said,

falteringly. "You all love liars. I spoke the truth, and you put me here."

"Keep quiet, or I'll break your neck!"

"You can do that, but you can't break my mind nor my will. I'll trouble you after I'm dead."

The keeper stared at him.

"Yes, you can keep me here till I rot, but you can't stop my tongue nor break me."

"Here's a visitor and inspector."

"Martin Kranz?" said the stranger.

"Yes, Martin Kranz, the Abbot!"

"Here are friends for you. Step out."

"Ach!" the Abbot exclaimed, stepping from his cell and seeing Peter Erb, Johanna, and Gustav. "My friends!" and he buried his face on Gustav's rough shoulder.

"Come out here and sign a paper," Peter said, helping him. "We've come to take you to Waterloo."

"So!" He nodded, only half comprehending the words.

"Ach, my sock!" he continued, seeing the empty gray sock on the table. "Where is my gold?"

"I have it safe," the inspector said, winking at the jailer. "Sign this paper."

"What for? To give away my gold?"

"No, no! To get yourself out."

After much persuading he signed, but it was not for a long time that he comprehended the fact of the Colonel's gift.

"So!" he mused in the coach, "so—he got me out? So! But how can I live long enough to fill it again?"

"Oh, you will live a long time," Peter said.

"Bet you will," Gustav added, clapping him on the shoulder.

"Not if you do that," he replied, with a touch of his old humor.

As he dismounted from the coach and once more beheld his little store, he wept, and before he opened the door he kissed the latch.

Gretchen, from her window, beheld this and longed for the time when she could visit him.

"You are an angel," she whispered to her grandsire, who sat near her, reading. And this to him was full reward.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RETURN OF KARL.

JULY passed into August, and August ran into September, without any second letter from Karl. The Abbot had not worried about him, but at the same time he felt anxious to know whether he was alive or dead. "To know whether he or the earth was on top," as he expressed it.

The news of the battle had come to him, but no news of Karl. Sometimes he thought he must be dead. At other times he imagined the boy in love, perhaps silent because of unhappiness.

One morning, as he swept the steps as usual, Gustav drove up and held out a letter—the long-expected missive.

"Tell me the news, too," Gretchen said, appearing for the first time since her illness.

"You!" the Abbot exclaimed, seeing her altered appearance. "Why, why, you must have been nigh dead!"

"Oh, no," she said, laughing. "I was travelling a dark road, that was all."

"Take the letter," he said, handing it to her.
 "Hold on, Gustav; you hear it, too."

"Come in," Gretchen said, shivering slightly.
 "The air is cold."

The Abbot lit the fire and made her very comfortable, while Gustav looked on, warming his hands and grinning.

"What's that about friends?" the Abbot questioned, after the letter had been read.

"He says he's bringing two friends to Canada," Gretchen answered, slowly. "'Jennings' is the name, I think."

"He'd better find out beggars can't feed beggars," the Abbot snarled. "He's no son of mine."

"He must have been very brave," Gretchen said, pondering. "He doesn't say he saved his friend, but he must have, to be wounded the way he was. It's a blessing he got better."

"Blessings come in disguise and vice versa," the old man said, sharply. "Some might call it a blessing, but I might think it otherwise."

"That 'ere jail ought to have taken that out of yer," Gustav said, emphatically. "You're no parent, accordin' to my way."

The old man was silent.

"Well, we must fix up the shop," Gretchen said, enthusiastically. "Gustav, you bring some cedars, will you, and I'll get some flags."

"Make no poppy show," the Abbot said, settling himself on his box. "I can't afford anything. I've got to fill up that sock again."

"Don't mind that," Gretchen said, turning to him.

"Mind that?" he grunted. "I'd sooner mind that than my eternity. My, how a letter tells who's writing! I know what species of donkey Karl is from this bray," and he tore the letter in two.

At noon, when the market was over at Jeremy's, the people flocked to the crossroad, eager and expectant, to meet the boy Karl.

Johanna was in the forefront, carrying a wreath of daisies with which to crown the conqueror. Immediately behind her came Gustav's wife, who was twisting her blue gingham apron into a tight rope in her excitement. Behind her Father Erb, who conversed with Nichol Schluz, the new village keeper-of-peace, about the war and other weighty matters, such as who should have the first wagon-room beside the new plank walk in the market. Back of these a straggling group of men, women, and children, who talked and outtalked each other as to the color of Gustavia's butter, some insisting it was too pale. Some thought it right to be honest, but the majority said it was right to cheat a little and that Gustavia ought to be made

to use a few carrots. A certain youngster, the child and nephew of two large women, happened to spy the good preacher's new boots, at which he danced around his mother and aunt like a young cub, compelling them to look at them.

"Guess the old Colonel keeps him," the younger of the women said, obeying the nephew's injunction to look. "Why, he can't even pay me a shilling for treading my legs off on his old melodeon every Sunday."

"You don't tell!" another woman replied. "If I were you, Eleanor Maria, I'd go and tell him he owed you new boots before himself."

But Eleanor Maria looked shy, and when Peter turned about gave him, as usual, an approving smile.

"Here's that Glebe girl," the restless youngster said, seeing Gretchen coming along the road. "Look, she's all dressed up in white!"

"I did up that dress," Johanna said, proudly. "Lots of work on them frills, too."

"Such fixings is unrighteous," Eleanor Maria remarked; "and my sister thinks so, too."

"Not if I can keep cool in doin' it," Johanna said, wisely. "It's only unrighteous to wear 'em if they was sworn at in the tub or in the ironin'."

"Miss Glebe," Peter Erb called, raising his flat hat, "just a moment, please."

"Yes," replied Gretchen. "What is the time, please?"

"Just one o'clock," he said, glancing at his watch. "I want you to meet Nichol Schluz, the new town keeper-of-the-peace."

"Your friend, sir," she said, courtesying.

"It is a lovely day."

"Don't go," Peter said, as she turned away. "Those people are not in your class. Remain with us."

"Not so, good Peter," she replied, in an amiable mood. "They are all my friends."

At this Peter shrugged his shoulders and looked displeased.

"These people say you are in love with Karl Kranz," Johanna said, holding the wreath on her head. "Ain't it becoming, though?"

"You should not tell everything," Eleanor Maria said, watching Gretchen to see if she blushed.

"I believe he's comin'," Johanna said, ignoring her words. "I see some dust there."

At this the women and men all strained their necks and eyes to see, and declared it was the coach.

When Gustav came near he flourished his new red whip and shouted, to which the group replied by shouting and waving their hats and kerchiefs, and when Karl alighted he was almost

blinded by Johanna's wreath, which proved to be too large. Then came a posy from someone else and several bunches of grass and weeds, plucked by the excited boys, all of which he accepted, mute and bewildered by the sudden and severe ovation.

"A jolly fool!" Jennings roared, clapping his legs. "Oh, Kranz, you are a jolly fool! Take off that crown and throw away those weeds." At which the people stepped back, some looking very glum.

"Take your stuff and don't bother us," Jennings laughed in their faces. "Come on, Karl," and with this he pitched the wreath, posy, and weed bouquet over the fence near by.

"I am glad to see you," Peter said, breaking the awkward pause that followed.

"And me, too," Nichol added, displaying his new badge as keeper-of-the-peace.

"So am I," said Gretchen, courtesying a little way before him. "We all are."

"Miss Glebe," Karl said, with bright eyes, "let me bring forward my friends. Miss Delia Jennings and Captain Jennings."

Gretchen bowed again, turning aside the Captain's familiar smile and flattering words with a bright laugh.

"I will help you carry your parcels," she said to Delia. "The gentlemen are evidently tired."

At this Jennings winked, but Karl flushed. It was like meeting the west wind to meet Gretchen, and he felt the wind had stung his cheek.

The people, still sullen, followed Karl and Jennings to the shop-door and there left them, shaking their fists at the tall stranger and muttering something about a change in the boy Karl.

"Well, sire," said Karl, going to his father, who sat on the keg as usual, "I am home at last. These are my friends, Captain Jennings and his sister."

"Hum!" said the Abbot, glaring at the two without moving.

"Captain Jennings has come to seek his fortune," Karl said, jovially, finding chairs. "He is an Englishman."

"Better for him were he a German," the old man said, resuming his book.

"Queer old cuss," Jennings whispered to Karl. "Will he freeze us or eat us, if we stop here overnight?"

"Oh, I don't suppose so," Karl said, looking perplexed. "But I am not sure that we have room. I thought you spoke of stopping near by—say Gustav Heink's or the preacher's, Peter Erb's."

"Haven't got a farthing," Jennings said,

slapping his empty pockets. "Have you, Delia?"

"Only one," said this wistful little creature; "but you may have it."

"Oh, I'll fix it," Karl said kindly to her. "Come with me, Jennings."

"A deuced pretty girl," Jennings said, when he and Karl were on the road. "I mean that Gretchen of yours, the old Colonel's granddaughter."

"You may know I think so when I'm her slave."

"Phew! She's too fine for you."

"I don't doubt it."

"I'll have to make up to her myself."

"Here's Peter. Straighten your hat."

CHAPTER XV.

DELIA.

Two weeks went by while Walter Wrenn Jennings and Delia were lodging comfortably in Peter's house, at Karl's expense. Jennings had ridden out each day in leggings and scarlet coat, Delia had received calls and returned a few, and Karl had worked hard in the store to make enough to meet their expenses.

Each day Jennings had produced letters to his cousin, Peter Hunter, in York, but each day he had put them back in his pocket promising Karl to go to York the day following without fail.

At Glebeholm Jennings had been a frequent guest, and in the eldest Miss Zoellner he found a spinster slave. To her he was the loveliest of mortals this side of heaven, a real bit of old-time manhood among the fungus growth of the new century, a tower of physical strength, and a Gibraltar of intellect!

At times of these outbreaks of admiration her milder and younger sister would rock back and

forth in her chair, railing at the weakness of her sex and exclaiming at the way women extolled their enemies, for such she considered all men.

To balance this, Miss Zoellner would pick at Delia, hold her out as a frail woman, a butterfly to a stone column, compared to man.

At Glebeholm Miss Zoellner spread her contagious malady, for Miss Mina was in raptures and worried her father constantly to say that Jennings was the kind of man he would like to have for a grand son-in-law and heir. Gretchen was drawn to the man, too, and wondered at the influence he exercised over all. She liked to hear his full, round laugh and to see his fine figure in the finest of clothes. Often she would contrast him with Karl, turning up her lip at the latter's crudeness and rough clothes, afterward rebuking herself and thinking of Karl's eyes, which always attracted her.

Of Delia she thought less than of her brother. She felt sorry for her great loneliness and would have liked to take the wistful, pleading look from her eyes, but as a companion she disliked her. For this she often rebuked herself, too, trying to remember her lesson of charity. Charity! Ah, yes, it had seemed to her a trellis covered with morning glories, but soon it was to become a wall, bare and dark, hard to climb over.

Sitting one afternoon beneath the maples, toward sunset, she was surprised to hear a smothered sob behind her. Turning, she beheld Delia moving toward her, with streaming eyes and cheeks bathed in tears.

"Why, Delia," she said, going to her, "what is the matter?"

"Something awful," she sobbed. "Don't touch me."

"Don't cry then. Someone will hear," Gretchen said, seating her gently. "Tell me what is the matter."

"Oh, I can't. I can't speak. It's too awful!"

"Has your brother been scolding you?"

"Oh, no. He would kill me if he knew it."

"Why, what is it?" Gretchen said, bewildered.

"Oh, I can't tell. I must just die. I came to say good-by, because you have been kind to me."

Gretchen's cheek burned at this undeserved gratitude. She stroked the pretty blond curls, wet and matted with tears.

"Tell me," she said, softly. "I will be kinder still."

"Then help me to die," Delia sobbed again. "I can't live."

"To die!" she exclaimed. "Why, Delia!"

"Oh, I must die!" she said, opening her swollen eyes.

Gretchen was silent. She could hardly believe that this weeping, miserable girl was the pretty, gay elf she had seen on the country road yesterday.

"Tell me what troubles you," she said, very kindly.

"I must die!" Delia whispered, half wildly. "I must die, for I'm going to have a child!"

Gretchen turned pale and was silent while she continued:

"You know, I didn't think it was wicked. I got lonely when the Frau's daughters went out with their officers, and when he came I was so glad to see him I was weak. Oh, I must die—I must die!"

"No, no," Gretchen said, controlling her feelings. "I will help you. You must go away."

"Yes, for the sake of Karl, for I love him."

Again Gretchen paled.

"Yes, you must go," she repeated, with difficulty. "I will help you. You'd best go to York."

"Without him or you!" Delia gasped.

"Yes; don't be foolish. I will take you and leave you there for a time, and then I will visit you."

"I have no money."

"I have a little. I will get more from Johanna. She will help us keep it a secret."

"Walter will kill me!" she said, weeping again. "I had better die now."

"No, no," Gretchen said, growing sterner. "You must not think of such a thing. Come, I will help you."

Delia stared at her. "Surely," she thought, "I have talked to an angel."

"Come and get warm," Gretchen said, helping her to her feet. "You are shivering."

"Are you an angel?" the girl whispered, taking her hand. "You must be."

Under pretence of purchasing clothes, Gretchen coaxed her grandfather to let Johanna take her and Delia to York. The old Colonel looked doubtful at first, but when he saw a shabby pair of boots, a faded basque, and torn kerchief (put on for the occasion of the coaxing), he thought a second time and gave his consent.

Accordingly, on the following Saturday, Gretchen, Johanna, and Delia waited at the crossroad for Gustav. Delia was as bright as a cricket, and, to Gretchen's amazement, talked of buying some pretty ribbons and perhaps a new pair of silk mitts. As they stood waiting, Jennings appeared from a field close by, and, switching his cane hither and thither among the buttercups and daisies, breaking many, he advanced to the little group. Before he had quite

reached them Gretchen, always alert, called out:

"Are you a scythe or a mower, Captain Jennings?" which made him frown for an instant. "You would be valuable in a mustard path, and I shall commend you to Gustav."

"I tried to coax Kranz," he said, ignoring her remarks, "but he's buried in a book. I declare, he beats the old man now. Thank heaven, I'm not such a money fiend! I ask him why he does it, and he says, 'To make money'; but where it comes in, I can't see."

"Perhaps he's writing something," Delia said, pouting. "He's all right. Don't scold him, Walter."

"Well, he might as well take a holiday sometime."

"Are you going to take one?" Gretchen said, smiling to herself.

"Why, yes. I'm going to York."

"To York!" all three exclaimed.

"Why, of course. Don't eat a fellow!"

"I'm sorry you're coming," Gretchen added, frankly. "Couldn't you wait until Monday?"

"The idea!" he said, knocking a daisy beside him five feet in the air. "Of course not!"

Delia, offended at Gretchen's words, took hold of her brother's hand, but he shook her off quickly for her pains.

It being Sunday, when the coach reached York Gustav had the day free, so he and Johanna went for a walk, the latter blushing and beaming as if Gustav were going to woo her. When they had gone, Jennings betook himself to his cousin, Peter Hunter, so the girls were left alone.

"Johanna is going to get you a room with some old friends of hers," Gretchen said, looking out of the window. "When will you go to them?"

"Oh, don't talk of it!" Delia cried, wistfully. "Let's talk of the big shop over there and the ribbons I'm going to buy."

"But, Delia, we've got to settle things."

"Oh, Walter will see our relatives and they will take me in; but he says I'm to be his cousin, Effie Moore, and not his sister."

"Why doesn't he want you to be known as his sister?"

"Oh, I didn't ask him. I just said all right, for I must do as he says, you know."

"Then you don't want me to help you?"

"Oh, yes I do," Delia said, putting her arm about Gretchen's neck. "If you would get me some new clothes I would be pleased."

Gretchen was perplexed, but added: "I will get you a new coat for cold weather, and those ribbons you want."

"Oh, you angel!" she cried. "You are an

angel! But, look! There's Wallie at the door in a grand chaise."

Gretchen looked, and to her surprise saw Jennings step out of a chaise, with coachman and footman on the box.

"I have found my cousin," he said, opening the door, breathlessly. "They invite you to dine with them at Government House. Will you come?"

"Well, I don't know," Gretchen replied, with hesitation. "I must see Johanna first."

"I have seen her," Jennings said, untruthfully. "She says to go by all means."

At this Gretchen's eyes brightened and she went for her hat. Delia looked longingly at her brother, but, seeing his frown, kept perfectly still.

Instead of driving direct to Government House, Jennings ordered a drive along the Lake front. Gretchen was surprised at this, but said nothing.

"My dear girl," Jennings said, taking hold of her hand familiarly, "now I have my desire. Since coming to Waterloo I have been longing to tell you a secret. Now I can tell it. I love you." And he pressed her hand to his lips.

"Don't!" she said, bewildered. "I want to enjoy the beauty of the water."

"Well, well," he laughed, "you are a school-

girl. But here," and he drew a box from his pocket, "I have something for you." And he produced a pearl ring. "This is for you, sweetheart. We are engaged, but I want you to keep it a secret."

"What do you mean?" she replied, with fear in her eyes.

"I mean that I adore you and am going some day to marry you—to take you home to England, for I will be Sir Walter Jennings soon, and possessor of a vast estate near London."

Gretchen was silent, so he continued, pleased with the impression he was making.

"You know you are too rare and beautiful to live in a hole like Waterloo. Why, in London you would put the dukes and princes on a mad trail after you. You do not love me yet, but you will. The man always loves first and then makes the girl love him. Believe me, darling; this is so, I am sure. Let me put this on your finger. Don't hold back. See, it is very beautiful! Look at that middle pearl! There, now you are mine."

"No, not engaged," she faltered. "Only friends."

"Yes, of course; engaged friends."

CHAPTER XVI.

JENNINGS'S STAR ASCENDS.

RETURNING to Waterloo with Johanna, Gretchen was very silent. Something was evidently weighing upon her mind.

"What is troublin' your heart?" the good woman questioned, as they neared the crossroad. "Tell your old Hanna."

"Nothing," Gretchen replied, assuming a smile. "I was just thinking."

Thinking—yes! Her mind was torn with remorse, and she kept the finger with the ring on hidden from view.

"Delia is safe," Johanna said, thinking to ease her. "She's gone to her relatives. They'll see to her. Poor child, she wept over them ribbons you got her. I saw her one day trying them on before the glass, a-prancin' up and down like a little duchess."

The Colonel was not long in detecting the trouble in Gretchen's mind, and questioned about York; but Johanna, ignorant of the drive, said it must be that the girl was longing after

the pretty things she saw at the Governor's or she might be only tired.

One evening, as Gretchen sat alone pondering the troubles of her heart, she heard her grand-sire's inquiries, and, determining to save herself any disclosure of her secret, resolved to take off the ring and forget it all. Accordingly, she stole out into the maples, put the ring in a box, and buried it. Then, pretending to be happy, she went off through the gate, singing, and across to the little corner store.

Here she found Karl, busy as usual over his papers and writing.

"How's Jennings?" he said, jumping up and standing before his papers as if he were ashamed of them. "I haven't heard from him for two weeks."

"He's very well, I think," she replied, with heightening color. "I haven't heard myself for several days. He found his cousin, you know, the Governor, and drives in a great chaise and is as grand as the Governor himself. I suppose he will live at Government House now."

"Oh, no," replied Karl, smiling bitterly. "He's home now. He sent his servant over here with a letter, saying he was now Colonel Jennings with a good salary, but for all that, he was coming to live in Waterloo."

"I suppose you are glad," Gretchen said,

only half-conscious of what she was saying. "He will give you a good time."

"He's a colonel," Karl said, more bitterly. "I'm only a tradesman. He reminded me of this in his letter."

"What are you reading?" she said, to change the subject. "You are very interested in it. Captain Jennings says you are always reading."

"Colonel Jennings," Karl said, mockingly. "Don't forget it is colonel."

Gretchen smiled.

"This is a familiar book," he continued, picking it up. "Did you ever see it before?"

"Goethe—ah, yes!"

"It has been my friend and constant companion," he said, tenderly, "and ever will be, for its sake and the sake of the giver."

Gretchen's eyes fell to the floor. Karl's praises were few, and always made her feel unworthy of them.

"Where is Delia?" he said, breaking the pause that followed. "Did she remain in York?"

"Yes," Gretchen said, lifting up her eyes and fastening them on him. "She is with friends."

"I'm glad, for she is an affectionate little creature. She adores Jennings and you."

"And you," Gretchen ventured.

Karl opened his eyes.

"Oh, yes. She talks of you continually. She is foolishly in love with her brother, but wisely in love with you."

"This is news," Karl replied.

"Oh, you pretender!" she laughed. "You know it well. And, seriously, I feel sorry for her. I would like to help her to a larger love."

"Than I?"

"No, no. There, I have caught you! No, not that. To lift her into a spirit love. Hers is a childish love."

"I wish you would give lectures to the people round here," he said, smiling cynically. "They all need it. Peter Erb is pestered with six childish sweethearts."

"Perhaps I will lecture in York or London some day," she replied, gravely. "I really am going to."

"Know the old attic before you study the stars," Karl said. "Waterloo needs your philosophy."

At this juncture Jennings, scowling darkly, entered the store.

"Good-day," he said, haughtily, to Karl; but Karl was a statue. "Sulky cur!" he muttered, turning to Gretchen. "Isn't he sulky, Gretchen?"

"Miss Glebe, still," Gretchen replied, solemnly.

"Oh, yes, Miss Glebe. Well, Miss Glebe, I have come to take you for a drive. Your grand-sire will join us, and bids you come."

"How nice!" she replied, brightening. "Good-by, Karl."

Karl started at the words. "Karl!" he muttered; "Karl, for the first time from her lips." But then he smiled bitterly, saying: "I see she plays two hands at once. I wonder who she does love, or if her love is all in her theories? Time will tell, anyhow. No matter how I love her, I will not press my suit, for I'm only a tradesman. But," he said, picking up his papers, "this will make me something else, may be give me a chaise like his, and then I will offer myself to her."

Jennings was shrewd enough to recognize a rival in Karl, so made sure of gaining the old Colonel's admiration and Miss Mina's adoration. He bought the largest house in the place, except "Glebeholm," and spent time and money in making it handsome. He bought horses, coaches, and chaises, and brought a troop of servants from York to attend to these and "The Villa," as his house was called. He wore fine clothes and pure silk stockings with gold buckles at his knees and instep.

The burghers thought him a king of wealth and wonder, and would stand in their doors at

a certain hour to see him and his friends drive by with the flourish of trumpets.

Gretchen saw it all, but was not fascinated by it as much as her grandsire desired she should be or as much as Jennings had imagined she would be.

On one occasion, after she had been out with his guests, she seemed very cool to him. He followed her in through the gate, inquiring if it was because he had sworn at and beaten an unruly horse.

"No; it is nothing in particular," she said, speaking the truth. "I didn't enjoy it to-day, that was all."

"It's because I had that drunken sot, Peel, I suppose. I kicked him out for behaving so."

"Well, if you can have him under the name of gentleman," she said, forgetting her resolution to be silent, "why can't you have Karl?"

Jennings at this bit his mustache and looked dark.

"It's this way," he said, with assumed gravity. "He's in love with Delia, and I don't want her to marry into such poverty."

The answer seemed satisfactory to Gretchen, so she yielded to his invitation to stroll about the garden. His declaration of Karl's love fastened itself in her mind.

"Let's sit here," he said, wondering at her silence.

"Not here. These maples are sacred to me. Never talk lightly beneath them or in this place. We will go to that seat yonder."

"Sacred!" he exclaimed. "Why, my dear girl, wherever your foot falls, every square inch is sacred."

"Better say square foot," she replied, tossing her head. "It would fit it better."

"You still wear my ring?" he said, taking her hand. "Why, no. Where is it? You had no right to take it off without asking me."

"It hurt me," she replied, with truth.

"Well, dearest, I will have it fixed. Go and get it now."

"It's too far. I will give it to you again. Besides, I don't want to wear it, because we are not engaged."

"Why, dearest, we are," he said, kissing her hand. "Don't you remember you promised to marry me in December, and I have your grand-sire's consent and your aunt's blessing."

"I don't remember promising you," she said, rising. "I wish you would not bother me. I do not love you yet. I have always imagined I should love a hero of some kind, and I feel that you are not a hero. Of course, you may be soon."

"Ah," he said, smiling out of the corners of his eyes, "I was just going to tell you that I had a fortune-teller at 'The Villa,' who told me I was to be a hero soon, and she said it looked as if it would be in saving someone. Don't you go into danger all this week."

"Then you don't want to save me?"

"Oh, my dear girl, I would risk my life to save you, but I would just as soon make myself a hero over someone else, who didn't matter as much."

"What do you call danger?" she questioned.

"Well, don't go into any woods but the Pines alone, for there are highwaymen about."

"I never go much to the west woods unless Karl is with me, anyway."

"Kranz!" he said, viciously. "What do you go with him for?"

"Oh, we are old friends."

Jennings rose and followed her, apparently upset again, for he frowned darkly. "Bring me the ring," he said, reaching the door. "You must wear it."

"I can't bring it," she said, with impatience, "for it is buried."

"Buried!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, buried; but I will return it," she added, frightened by his fierce eyes.

Without further words he turned and stalked

away, she staring after him with tears in her eyes.

"Colonel Jennings!" she called, thinking she had been unkind. "Colonel Jennings!"

He turned around at her words, smiling as if nothing had happened.

"Come with me," she said, when he returned. "I will dig it up and wear it. I am sorry I hurt you so."

"Do, like a dear one," he said, patronizingly. "I will help you."

Together they located the spot and rescued the ring.

"Now I will seal it on," he said, slipping it on her finger and kissing her. "Remember, you must not be insubordinate again."

She was silent and parted from him in silence. The man's influence over her was a mystery. She did not recognize it, and so it was all the more potent.

Karl saw him leave the gate and felt embittered when he saw him pass the store without stepping in. Turning to his papers, he exclaimed:

"You are my Gretchen, and my friend!"

"Do you think I would know when I loved anyone?" Gretchen asked Johanna, as she retired that night. "Do you think I would be sure of it?"

"Can't say that you would," the old woman replied, looking at her. "I never put much store on sudden loves. It takes months and years sometimes to find out which one to take, just as it has took the preacher."

"Do you think if a man loved me I could make myself love him, if he gave me a good home and means to carry out my mission?"

"Believe me, I do think you could love him if he loved you and did all that. I made myself love Johann with none of that."

"Good-night," Gretchen said, softly; "good-night." And before Johanna could speak again she had put out the candle, so the old woman was obliged to leave the room, wondering if she had answered correctly.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE COVETED PRIZE.

ABOUT the middle of October Peter Erb made it known unto his flock that he had chosen his wife, that at last the hammer of decision had fallen. Busy tongues talked over the affair, and at Glebeholm there was a constant flutter of excitement. The hammer had fallen on Mina Glebe, and the old Colonel's eyes shone, for he thought spinsterhood a mild disgrace of the gods.

"I am delighted that Mina is settled," he said one day to Gretchen. "I only wish you were settled, too. You talk of ideals and all such things. How do you ever expect to realize ideals here? Why, this place is dead, and not a likely abode for any unusual sort of man or a spot in which to work out such ambitions as yours. If you would marry Colonel Jennings the way would be clear, for he would take you to London, where there is scope for such work."

"I must be the ideal before I can lecture," Gretchen responded, with a sigh. "And I can

grow here as well as anywhere for the present. London will wait."

"True, you're only sixteen, but you will be seventeen soon, and with a husband as much older as is Colonel Jennings you would be quite safe."

"I am not afraid of the future, grandsire."

"Well, you talk of ideals and things, and Peter says you really have some good qualities mixed with the débris of your sins. Why not go and preach them? Don't stay bottled up too long, or your ideals may not effervesce when they are uncorked. They may have lost their life."

"No danger of that, I think."

"Colonel Jennings is a man you should be proud of. You are more favored by his courtship than any Glebe has been favored for centuries. Your opportunities, by uniting yourself with him, will be double fold. He has asked me for your hand."

"He is very quick," Gretchen interrupted, with a flash in her eye. "He had better ask me first."

"Has he not asked you?"

"Not in a proper fashion."

"Oh, pshaw! He is offhand, I dare say. All military men are. You should know that. Don't be like most of your sex, who weep if a man doesn't put in every word he ought to.

Consider it a compliment if he loves you so much he forgets words."

Gretchen toyed nervously with the ring. She wondered at herself for holding back. There was something about it all she could not understand. There was something clouded.

"By the way," her grandsire said, returning to the room, "I have a letter from Colonel Jennings's sister for you."

She broke the seal quickly and read:

"YORK, October 16, 1815.

"DEAREST GRETCHEN:

"Life is unendurable without you and Karl. I would kill myself if I only knew how. Walter says you love Karl, but you must not, for he loves me. If you love him you are my tombstone, for I shall die if it is true. My only salvation is to become his wife. Walter adores you. Don't break his heart as mine is being broken. I am with strangers now. My friends forsook me.

"Your fleeting friend,
"DELIA."

Surely this seemed like a whisper of fate, echoing her grandfather's words.

To marry Jennings would solve two problems and set her mind at rest.

"Do I love the man?" she questioned of herself. "I surely do, but don't know how to love

properly. I like to be with him. I am proud of him. He fascinates me. He is rich and powerful. I surely love him, but don't know how to love like other girls."

At this instant Peter and Miss Mina passed the window. They were gazing at Glebeholm. It would be theirs some day. "Then what shall I do?" Gretchen whispered, pressing her face to the glass. "They will neither want me nor I them. Karl will have married Delia, and perhaps Colonel Jennings someone in York. Then I will be alone, without home or money. I might make some, but there is only sewing, and I loathe that. I wish girls could work and support themselves; then they could take their time about deciding and getting married."

For two days Gretchen refused to mingle in the festivities at "The Villa" and sought solitude. On Sunday afternoon, as usual, she went to the "Pines" to have her rest and refreshment.

Seating herself on her favorite stump by the little stream, she forgot all the outside world and for a time was in heaven.

"Now, soul," she said, closing her eyes to the murmur of the little brook and the pines, "call thy guardian spirit to thine aid and tell me whether or not I shall marry this man."

While she thus sat she saw a scroll before

her. Several pines had turned into a golden scroll, rolled into two parts, as the ancient Jewish Scriptures. Unrolling the first, she read in white letters, "Gretchen." Beneath this there were letters, hieroglyphics she could not decipher, so she turned to the other scroll. This scroll, as she touched it, turned dark, the color of copper, and when she unrolled it she saw the name "Walter," written in pale letters. Laying it down, she came to the conclusion that Walter was her future husband. But, curiously, when her hand had left it, it broke in two parts at the joining point, and slowly each piece unrolled and rolled again in the opposite direction, the one on which Gretchen was written turning black and the other silver. "Strange!" she exclaimed, and watched it further. Then it seemed as if a ray fell out of the heavens upon the black scroll, and this ray turned it to gold again, but the shadow of the ray fell on the silver one, making it black. The golden one then unfurled and lay before her as a mirror. On it she saw a youth struggling under the weight of a wounded man. "This is where he saves Walter," she said, forgetting even to say Karl's name. The picture then faded, and instead of the body the youth carried the black scroll, just seen. This seemed to oppress him, and he labored under

it. She felt impelled to relieve the youth, but was unable to move, and he struggled on until exhausted. Falling at last beneath the burden of this black scroll, it unfurled and covered him over. Then suddenly it turned to gold again, and on it shone, in white letters, the word "Gretchen." Gradually the mists faded, the vibrations ceased, and Gretchen stared. "'Walter,'" she said, remembering the first of the pictures, "'Walter' was written on one and 'Gretchen' on the other. Fate seems set on this union."

"Footsteps!" she exclaimed, hearing someone behind her. "Who comes?" But no one made answer.

"Who comes?" she repeated. But there was no reply.

"Who comes?" she cried a third time, hearing the crackle of a pine branch to the right.

"We come!" two ruffians said, darting to her. "We want you!" And, picking her off her feet, they started to carry her to the edge of the wood.

"Help! Help!" she called, wildly. "Help! Help! For God's sake, help!" She struggled, but the ruffians were strong.

"Help! Help!" she shrieked, in terror. "Help! Help!"

"Hold there!" a commanding voice cried,

and a revolver rang on the air. The villains dropped Gretchen on the spot and fled before Jennings, who shot at them a second time.

"Dearest," he said, lifting her, "I told you to avoid danger. How came you here?"

"You are the hero," she whispered. "The fortune-teller was right. Oh, how can I repay you?"

"By marrying me," he answered, kissing her cheek. "By marrying me."

He carried her tenderly to his coach and with great care lifted her into it, for she seemed to be in a swoon.

News of Gretchen's rescue spread rapidly over the town. Jennings was lauded to the skies. Miss Mina sobbed over him, and the old Colonel grasped his hand, blessing him hoarsely. Johanna praised him with fervor, and Johann looked at him with awe. The children ran after him when he walked in the streets, for they had been told the tale as a warning for them to keep out of the woods, and the women huddled together in silent groups whenever they saw him coming. But on top of this feverish furor came the news of Gretchen's illness. Two physicians drove from York, and, as they passed through the village streets, the people, full of grief, watched through their half-open doors.

"Just such a malady as the last," the oldest doctor exclaimed at the bedside. "It's marvellous if she holds out a second time."

Gretchen, tormented, talked incessantly of the two scrolls, calling for her grandsire to save her from the villains.

"Oh, I am burning, burning!" she cried. "Where is he—where is my grandsire—he used to love me—there's that black scroll breaking that boy's back—take it off my brain—my grandsire used to love me!"

"And he does still," the old Colonel said, falteringly. "He never moves from your side."

"Oh, no," she wailed. "He wants to settle me—he wants me to go away."

At this the old man's eyes filled and he bowed his head in heavy remorse at ever having spoken of such a thing.

"I'm burning! I see my white name, Gretchen. Oh, help! Save me!"

"I have sacrificed her," he whispered to Johanna, who bathed her head. "I know I have, for I tried to force her to marry that man. If she lives I swear she shall choose for herself."

"The Abbot, the Abbot!" she cried, one afternoon, without ceasing. "He will help me."

"Get him," the old Colonel commanded, able

to bear it no longer. "Beg him to come, Johanna."

So Johanna went weeping to the Abbot, and the old man, unable to refuse, came to the bedside with Karl.

"I'll tell her you are here," she whispered, taking the feverish hand. "Gretchen, here is the Abbot with Karl."

"Karl!" she exclaimed, opening her eyes. "The old Abbot!" And she stretched out her hand to them.

"To-morrow will be my birthday," she said, sadly. "I will be seventeen." The old Abbot bent his head reverently. "You have come to make me well," she continued, stroking his rough, wrinkled hand. "Which shall I choose—the gold scroll or the black one?"

"Here's Karl," the old man said, not comprehending her words. "Here's Karl."

"Karl!" she exclaimed. "Have you come to make me well?"

"Yes," he replied, steadying himself and kneeling on one knee before her. "I would give up heaven to make you well."

The old Colonel glanced at him and the weeping old Abbot, and said in his soul: "These are gentlemen."

"Are you tired?" she said again. "You have rested me. Perhaps I have tired you."

"Oh, no; I am not tired. I am very happy."

"Happy!" she exclaimed. "What is happy? I believe I am happy, too. You must have made me well. I will sleep now."

Karl kissed her hand and laid it gently on the coverlet, took the old Abbot's arm and moved away him with. They did not speak to the old Colonel nor did he speak to them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MANUSCRIPT.

DURING Gretchen's convalescence Jennings was a faithful lover. He sent flowers and dainties in abundance, and servants almost hourly to inquire about her. As yet he had not called in person. But Gretchen thought nothing of this; indeed, she thought little of anything, for her mind was still far away. The love that her grandfather had bestowed on her was the sun that nurtured her to life. They talked and sat together and enjoyed perfect, undisturbed companionship, as Miss Mina and Peter were still at York on their honeymoon. She was glad to have them away, and her grandfather not sorry, though he never hinted it.

"I hear that Colonel Jennings is writing a drama," the Colonel said, one morning, to her. "He told me so privately. If it is successful, he will return to London in the New Year and probably remain there for the rest of his life."

"Oh, I didn't know he was literary," Gretchen replied, much interested. "What is it to be called?"

"I really am not sure, but I think he hinted it would be called the loveliest of names—Gretchen."

"Gretchen!" she said, remembering the scroll. "How peculiar!"

"Why peculiar?" her grandfather inquired.

"Well, to have one's name to a play, that's all."

"More of an honor, I should say," he replied, with a touch of his old pomposity. "But I have promised not to speak of love to you, so I must not. Excuse me, dear, while I speak to Johann. He is beckoning me."

"A visitor," he called back. "Will you see Colonel Jennings?"

"Yes," she replied, with calmness. "Yes, I will see him."

In a moment Jennings stalked into the room, where Gretchen sat by the open fire. His face was flushed and very handsome. He greeted her affectionately and seated himself between her and the Colonel, who had not forgotten his word about bothering Gretchen with marriage or love-affairs.

"Tell Gretchen of your literary enterprise," the Colonel said, opening the conversation. "She is interested. I told her as a secret."

"Yes, it must be a secret," Jennings said, soberly; "but I will tell her. You know, per-

haps, that I am a reformer in various branches. The stage is one of my branches. I think the old Shakespearean drama unexcelled, but in certain ways unadapted to the stage, the parts being irksome and uninteresting. Well, I have tried to draw a line between them and the trash of the day—to make a drama deep, yet light and interesting. Thus I have produced my play of ‘Gretchen.’” Gretchen smiled and asked him to continue. “I have thought of name after name, but I find none that so embodies to my mind my ideal. Therefore it is Gretchen. I think I shall have it printed now and staged in London the first of the New Year. There is no stage out here worthy of it, of course. My cousin says he would rather be in my shoes than those of the Mogul of India.”

“You will be lionized, no doubt,” Gretchen remarked.

“Ah, yes. Dramatists always are in London, except those of inferior order; and being myself titled, though only Colonel, I will be received everywhere. Indeed, the Governor says I will be knighted by spring. Such good fortune almost turns my head. I am sure it would quite do so if I were not strong intellectually.”

“No doubt,” the Colonel interposed, coughing.

"When it is printed and I am eulogized in Upper Canada and the American colonies, I will ask my great Gretchen to materialize and be as much mine as the drama."

Gretchen's eyes sought the floor, but she smiled with pleasure at the thought of her honors.

"I must be off," Jennings concluded, rising, "for I am expecting some friends from York, some jolly fellows and winsome girls. You must meet them at once. Good-morning." So he withdrew with the Colonel, and Gretchen sat alone, picturing to herself London society, the honors of her husband, and the magnitude of her work. For her mission still dwelled with her, and at every recollection of Delia she felt its vast import and clear calling.

Crossing the road, Jennings entered the corner shop.

"Good-day," he said to the old Abbot, who hobbled about in the dusk. "Where is your son, pray?"

"Yonder," growled the old man, pointing with his thumb and not looking up. Jennings moved in the direction indicated, and found Karl bent over numerous papers, two candles giving him sufficient light to write.

"Well, old chap," he said, looking at the papers, "how does it go?"

"Fairly well," Karl replied, gathering the papers together. "I expect to send it to-morrow to York, and thence to Boston for publication."

"You are a clever dog," Jennings continued, seating himself on the edge of the bed. "How did you ever do it?"

"Thought and work," Karl said, smiling.

"A puny object you are, all the same. You look like a white hyacinth grown in the dark."

"Glad I am no worse," Karl replied, putting his manuscript into a drawer.

"You have too many deuced ideals and ideas. Who is ever going to see a play where they can't see something worth seeing? Trees, fields, houses, and things, you can see every place. I want to see ballet girls and something larky. So does everyone."

"Well, I don't," Karl said, drawing down his lips at the corners. "I want something real, something fine. No bogus stuff or common trash for me."

"Oh, you and your ideal balloon will burst!" his companion said, scornfully. "You can't feed angels' food to men yet awhile."

"I don't want to," Karl replied, somewhat ruffled.

"What's its name, then?"

Karl was silent.

"As if I could not guess. You're an ass to

chase that girl. Why, she won't even look at me, much less you. Are you going to York with it?"

"No; I will send it by Gustav. I can't leave the shop very well. The Abbot's got rheumatics."

"Pity he wouldn't kick over," Jennings said, carelessly. "'Twould be a millstone off your neck. Have you heard from Delia lately?"

"This morning," Karl said, with some hesitation.

"She's insane over you—do you know it? By Jove, she is insane! If you could bring yourself to marry such a lunatic, I'd give you the Villa and run you for a year."

"You fool!" Karl said, savagely. "Am I a sawdust heap?"

"It was merely a suggestion," Jennings said, glancing around. "I should think you'd be tired of a rat-hole by this time and want to live like a man."

"I will soon," Karl answered. "Wait until this is out."

"Pshaw, I am not much stuck on that! Dramatists live on hay in a hovel."

"Well, I'll break the rule," Karl said, rising and lighting his pipe. "I'll live on something better, I'll swear, and I'll make it all with my pen."

"O sanguine fool! When does that coach leave? I want to send letters."

"Two sharp," Karl replied, reseating himself. "I must work again. The time is going like the wind. Good-by."

"All right, old Wormey," Jennings said, smiling. "I'll be gone." And he left the room.

"I wouldn't be a rich man's plaything," the Abbot said, scowling. "He treats you like a dog outside. Drives past you as if he never knew you, yet if it hadn't been for you he'd be in his grave at Waterloo."

"Well, don't worry about it," Karl said, good-naturedly. "When I get this sold I think I'll drive as fine a horse as he. Schmidt, at Boston, says I can make fifty pounds, and twice as much if I stage it in the old country. But I think I will wait for a second to put on over there. Fifty pounds will run us for a year. You'll give the shop over to Frau Heink and come and live with us."

"With us?" the Abbot growled. "Who is us?"

"Why, Gretchen Glebe."

"If you get her you have my blessing," the old man said, slowly. "But I fear she's gone."

"Not yet. I have waited to get this out and my name known before I asked her, that's all. I am sure Jennings has asked her a dozen times.

He may win in the long run, having so many friends, but we will see."

"Let Heink have this place!" the Abbot snarled, remembering Karl's former words. "I'll let him have my skin first."

"Well, but you will be alone," Karl said, persuasively. "You might as well enjoy life for a few years."

"Live on another man's work!" he continued, severely. "I'd sooner live on his flesh and be a cannibal out and out. Like to see any Heink in here! Not till I am buried away in the clay!"

Karl, seeing further argument would not move his father, bent over his papers to retouch them here and there, an expression of satisfaction covering his face.

"Why not take her over that lily?" the Abbot said, interrupting him. "Don't wait too long to strew your flowers or you may miss her."

Karl was struck with the idea and immediately laid down his pen.

"It's at its best now," the Abbot added, with interest. "Better take it before it or she is lost."

"Yes," said Karl, contemplating the flower on the window-ledge. "I'll take it now."

The day following, Karl, with restless eyes,

watched for Gustav Heink on the crossroads. He held in his hand his offspring, his beloved manuscript. At last Gustav came, and with brusque wit chid the youthful writer, but nevertheless he promised to deliver it safely at its address, at which Karl slipped a farthing into his hand to help him remember.

As Gustav drove away he stood and gazed after him. He felt as if he had sent a phantom ship into the seas of the fairies, which would return some day laden with treasures and the queen fairy. As he was thus speculating, a whip snapped in his ear and Jennings with a pleasure-party drove by, not noticing him as usual. But he was happy in his soul, feeling that success would crown his efforts soon.

"Perhaps he was angry at the lily," he thought to himself on his way home. "That never occurred to me before. It must be that, for he cracked the lash maliciously near my face." Then he remembered the farthings and pounds he had spent on him and Delia in Germany and elsewhere, of which not a cent had been paid back. He felt that Jennings's income was a shell, and that his power was but the sound of the sea in it, not the real sea, as everyone imagined. In his heart he pitied him, as only a strong man can pity a weak one.

About ten o'clock, as Gustav passed through

a dense wood, just before reaching his sister's house, which was the Midway Inn, he was held up by three highwaymen. He fought and shot thrice, but was wounded in a twinkling and swooned, falling off his box. The ruffians searched him and threw him into the grass by the roadside. His two passengers were overpowered next and almost strangled by the rags stuffed in and tied over their mouths. These were carried into the underbrush and fastened to saplings. Then the men, masked and savage, searched the coach; but, not finding there what they sought, pulled the coat and waistcoat off the now conscious Gustav, who cried with pain at this rough handling. Here they secured the papers, the beloved manuscript, and returned to the coach. Gustav groaned inwardly as he saw the precious sheets, so he thought, thrown into the coach, which was being set on fire.

"My God! My God!" he muttered. "They are burnt—they are gone!"

But a cunning man had gathered and sorted them, put them in his pocket, mounted Gustav's new mare, and galloped off toward York. The others, seeing the coach aflame, shot the old gray mare and rode off in the opposite direction, leaving Gustav to moan to his silent companions.

At York the ruffian bearing the papers was met by Jennings, who dispatched the manuscript to Boston by a friend, with a letter ordering the name to be "Grecêron," the French for Gretchen, no copies to be sold in Canada. He enclosed a fat note to insure good advertising abroad, together with a sketch of his life and a portrait for the publisher's use. Finishing the business by early morning, he rode home and appeared as usual at the hunt in the afternoon. He met Karl as he was riding out in his scarlet coat, and, as he was alone, accosted him, drawing a bright salutation in return, for Karl's boyish heart was full of expectation and forgiveness.

The day following being Saturday, a pleasure-party was planned at the "Villa" by the York guests. They insisted on Jennings and his friends returning with them, as there was to be a military ball Saturday week. So he, with his usual pomp, ordered preparations to be made for twelve, a select dozen, including the Colonel, Mina and Mr. Erb, Gretchen, and the Misses Zoellner. Accordingly, at an early hour, three coaches left the villa, stopped at Glebeholm, and passed the corner store. The Abbot, who was sweeping his front steps, looked up at the rumble of wheels and saw the merry party, chatting and laughing, drive away.

He called Karl to look at the coaches, but Karl remained within, having seen them through the window. He felt lonely at his dull lot, compared with theirs, which seemed so full of pleasure.

"But I will have spurs soon," he said, brightening. "I will hear from York the first of the week, and later from Boston, and then I will be free and let someone else dust this window, full of nails, hammers, horse's bits, and leather straps." He enumerated the articles as he dusted them and reset them on the faded patches of green cloth, where they had lain for months and years. Thus he went on dusting and musing until the Abbot, re-entering the store, disturbed him.

"Mother Heink and half a dozen crazy folks are running down the road. See what's the matter."

"Mother Heink!" said Karl, dropping his duster.

"Yes, and other folks running and going on like mad."

"My! what can be the matter?" Karl exclaimed, opening the door and looking out, and off he started up the road to meet them.

"Old Gustav Heink is killed," Frau Heink screamed, "and his coach is burnt up!"

"What!" said Karl, growing ashen.

"Yes; highwaymen robbed and then killed him!" a second cried, shrilly.

"And burnt the coach!" Frau Heink added, wildly.

"Where's Gustav now?" Karl inquired, taking hold of Frau Heink to steady her. "Tell me quickly!"

"He's home," she gasped, squatting herself on the roadside. "Home dead, and I am dead, too!"

"He said he wanted to see you," a third voice called. "He is up at his house."

"See me?" Karl replied. "Do you know what about?"

"No, no; only about papers!" Frau Heink cried, waving her hands to and fro. "And all his money's taken and the coach burnt up!"

By this time a dozen more of the villagers had gathered on the road, and even the old Abbot hobbled to the excited group. Some of the old men made up a sum of money on the spot and told Frau Heink they'd put Gustav on his feet again.

"And they shot old Bess!" she moaned, still uncomforted. "And it costs pounds to buy a horse, and one won't do, for they stole Brown Jim and burnt the coach! Oh, my God!"

"Hush!" said an old man, with a stiff collar and stiff morals. "It's the providence of God

that did it. Thou or Gustav must have offended the Lord. This is his vengeance, his just rebuke."

"Yea, yea! I know it is!" she cried, becoming wilder again. "I know it is."

"Well, take the Lord's doing with meekness," the stern friend continued. "It's the will of the Lord. He chastens and rebukes, for he hates sin."

"Glad I don't know him," the Abbot said, with flashing eyes. "I'd rather have the devil's goodness. Besides, you can't prove but 'twas an accident, Nichol Schluz."

"That's right," another said, crowding nearer to the Abbot.

"The poor Lord gets blamed for everything. Why didn't he say that when Peter Erb's house burned down? Was it the Lord's revenge? Did the preacher do wrong? I guess not."

After this there was silence. The Abbot and his disciples looked at their grim, gray colleague and he at them, whereupon Frau Heink became interested and stood up, forgetting to weep. The Abbot's words were felt, for he spoke as a man from the dead, being heard and seen so seldom.

The party then broke up and each man went his way, pondering his religious views even

more than Gustav's misfortune. But Frau Heink, turning again toward her own door, remembered her woe and wept copiously, several women following her example.

Meantime Karl had reached Gustav's house, had knocked loudly on the door, and entered without response.

"Gustav," he called, with anguish, "where are you?"

"Here, nigh dead!" said a weak voice from the corner by the hearth.

"Are my papers safe?" he inquired, bending over him eagerly. "Are they safe?"

"O God, they got burned!" Gustav gasped. "They got burned! They took them from me and put them into the coach and then burned it." Karl covered his eyes with his hands and fell into a chair behind him. "I'd sooner have been burned myself," Gustav continued, raising himself on his elbow, "but I didn't have no choice. Oh, my side!"

He sank back, weak from the pain of his wounds. Karl opened his eyes and gazed at him in silence for a long time. Then, hearing the voices of the returning women, he rose, stepped silently out of the back door, and ran across the fields like a mad man. He was filled with a wild grief that could not rest, so he ran on and on, miles across the country, he knew

not how far. His mind was in a state of confused despair.

Toward noon he became faint and suddenly realized his position. The sun streamed on his hair and beat upon his head with terrible strength. Able to go no farther, he fell under the shade of a tree, knowing naught but his grief and faintness. In the course of time a farmer passed by and saw him tossing in delirium.

"Hello!" he called. Karl looked up wildly. "Oh, Kranz, the infidel's son!" he hissed. "Lie down again. I'll never carry you, though you be dead and your polluted flesh still more polluted and silent." And Karl lay down, exclaiming, "Nichol Schluz!"

Fortunately this was market day, and several were coming home from Jeremys. The first of these was silent Wilhelm with his good wife Gustavia, who had learned of the poor lad's grief from Gustav and was praying for him when she beheld him by the road.

"Halt thee," she said to Wilhelm, getting out of the wagon. "Poor lad, poor lad!" she exclaimed, tenderly touching Karl; "thou art far out in the country. Come along with us."

Karl said nothing, but raised himself and with weak legs climbed into the cart, Gustavia spreading a blanket for him to lie on.

"Stop where the coach was burned," he muttered several times, opening his eyes and looking at the sky. "Tell me when we get to the place."

"Yes," said Gustavia, kindly. "It's quite a distance yet."

But at last they neared the scene of the disaster, and Karl, without being told, started up, staring about with wild eyes. Nothing but a few hoops of iron and a few nuts could be seen scattered here and there.

"Slow up!" he said, as they passed. "Whoah!" And before they had time to stop he had jumped out and snatched up a bit of torn paper. A tiny bit, only a few inches, but he cherished it as if it were a bit of his manuscript and seemed somewhat happy for finding even that much.

"Canst thou not get more paper like that?" Gustavia questioned, as they drove on.

"No. I tore up half the first copy, and half is no good."

"Ah, a book, was it?" she said, softly.

"Yes, my drama! My play! My life!"

"A drama! Something like a book? Well, write the other half again and don't worry thyself sick."

"The other half is out of my head now," Karl replied, sadly. "It's lost, all lost!"

"Thou'lt stop with us a day or so," she said, as they neared the house. "A change will do thee good. We have good fields, and Plymouth hens, and may be more that will interest you."

He thanked her wistfully and went not unwillingly into the house, to be a guest until Monday.

"Now the place is thine," she said, laying her hand on his shoulder. "Go where thou wilt and be at home. May heaven give thee rest at heart." And Karl, touched by her tenderness, which was the first woman's tenderness he had yet known, smiled his thanks.

CHAPTER XIX.

GRETCHEN IS PERSUADED.

AT York the Jennings party were royally entertained by their friends. Gretchen had never lived in such luxury and comfort in her life. It seemed to give her a new lease of days, and at first the brilliancy of the society into which she had been thrown was sweet to her; but, alas! before the eventful ball came off the elegance had lost its charm and the grandeur was insipid.

She and her grandfather and Colonel Jennings had been the guests of a Captain King, a short, talkative man of great hospitality and wealth. His home was in England, and he, at Jennings's request, was loud in his praises of London.

Gretchen listened carefully, sometimes full of joy at the city's wonders and sometimes full of regret at its vices. Some way, however, the Captain made her love London, and she began to think that it was the one and only centre of all great movements, social and ethical. She

was not aware that he knew of Jennings's devotion to her, so listened with eagerness, taking it all to herself and storing it in that little chamber of her mind where lay the idea of her life's mission. She was eager to visit London immediately.

Jennings was a delightful escort, and Gretchen knew by the longing glances cast at her by other girls that she was favored by his constant attentions. He took her here and there and sought to fulfil her every desire, which was not distasteful to her, any more than it would have been to any other ambitious maid of seventeen. Needless to say, her grandfather looked at it all with great pride and satisfaction, for even in his earlier days he had known nothing equal to his friend's luxurious life and comfortable mode of living.

The evening of the great ball came at last, the greatest gem in a hoop of seven brilliant diamonds—the seven brilliant days. Gretchen, according to her grandfather's wishes, had purchased a new satin gown, the first in her life, and it was with no little pride she attired herself in it for the evening. It was of crimson brocade, old for her, but nevertheless becoming to her dark hair and eyes, and pleasing to herself and the elders. Her aunt had lent her a chain of gold, a rare chain, and though she ac-

cepted it with hesitation, fearing to lose it, she was glad she had taken it after she clasped it on her white neck and saw how wonderfully becoming it was.

The old Colonel gazed at her with great pride, and Captain King and Jennings were greatly taken with her beauty.

"It really takes a ball dress to set a girl off," Jennings said to Captain King. "She's got a fine form, and though her face is a trifle pale, her eyes are like stars and her mouth's the sweetest I know."

"Ah, Colonel," Captain King replied, laughing, "I see where your heart lies. She certainly is beautiful and her manner frank and fascinating. She's the sort of girl I would crawl on the earth to please; but I suppose you don't have to crawl, having such prospects before you."

"She's impudent enough to me," Jennings said, curling his mustache. "I often long to tame her."

"Oh, pshaw! that's her beauty. Why, all the girls about here are like puppets compared to her. Let her alone and don't spoil her."

Jennings smiled and added, cynically:

"We'll be married at Christmas, I expect."

"Ah, indeed!" the Captain said, surprisedly. "Is it announced?"

"Lots of time for that. I don't intend to tangle my foot too soon. I have several on my roll-call just now."

"Ha, ha!" laughed King. "You are a clever chap. Well, the ladies are ready now. Take another glass. You must be gay to-night. Break ten hearts. Ha, ha!"

Jennings, with lips still moist with wine, approached the spotless Gretchen, who stood in the hall with her grandfather. He bowed before her and kissed her glove, much to her displeasure, especially when she saw the stain of wine upon it. But the others seemed to take it so naturally, she refrained from words and with difficulty controlled her indignation.

At the barracks she was undoubtedly the belle, her circle of besiegers being ever unbroken. Jennings was much annoyed by the attention she received, and swore at the Captain secretly for introducing her to so many men. He had only had one dance up to eleven o'clock, and determined to have all the rest. Gretchen managed to evade him, however, which made him still more angry, and at last, becoming desperate, he broke through her circle of admirers, taking his place beside her and glancing fiercely at the young gentleman with whom she was conversing.

The men all frowned as they withdrew, for

they knew that Jennings had come to monopolize her.

"You are very rude," she said, frankly. "I was talking to Mr. Lee about the Indians. He is most interesting. He tells me they are a wonderfully mystical people and that their myths are really beautiful."

"Yes, I dare say," he said, looking over her head.

"I repeat that you are very rude," she continued, smiling. "What do you say to that?"

"Come, let's go into the sitting-room," he exclaimed, ignoring her remark. "It's overcrowded here."

She yielded, as she always did to Jennings's will, at the same time wondering why she did so. The man undoubtedly had power over her, although she could not recognize it. Mentally she was equal to him and immovable, but physically she was unequal to him and easily moved, for the strength of his body overpowered the strength of her mind.

"Let's sit here," he said, choosing a secluded spot, and she obeyed. "Now, dearest," he continued, with condescension, "I love you. These men don't. Therefore I pray you to only stay with me, for I would save you from all coarse remarks and flirtations. I want you

to promise to marry me and let our engagement be announced at once."

"Oh," said Gretchen, starting, "I must speak to grandfather about it first. Besides, I don't understand what you mean about coarse remarks and flirtations."

"I have spoken to the Colonel," Jennings persisted, "and he says you're in luck to get me, but of course I think I am in luck to get you. Now kiss me, darling." And he drew her very close to him. "Tell me that you will be mine and only mine."

She thought for some time—thought of Delia and thought much of Karl; but these two seemed fated to wed. There were no other persons to think of, except Peter Erb and her aunt, and as for these she would rejoice to get away from them.

"But my grandfather," she said, suddenly. "I can't leave him, Walter."

"He will come to England with us," he answered, persuasively. "He is waiting now to know your answer, as I am."

Again Gretchen pondered, until Jennings became impatient and enumerated in long succession her blessings in married life. Then, bending over her lovingly, he gazed into her face, waiting for her answer.

"I will marry you," she whispered, with quiv-

ering lips; "but," she added, with a sigh, "I am glad it's over with."

"What do you mean?" Jennings said, stiffening a little.

"Well, I have been pulled and persuaded, and I am glad it's over now."

"Then you do not love me, do not adore me? Why, I know fifty women who would jump at the chance to love me."

"Well, don't scold," she concluded, playfully. "I have spoken. I will keep my word."

"The ideal!" he exclaimed, staring at her. "One would think I was beating a bargain with you."

"Perhaps you are," she said, laughing. "But I know I am bought now, bargain or no bargain."

Her words were not pleasing to him, and he was piqued with the matter-of-fact way she accepted him.

"Surely," he muttered, "I am sought by many, and barely tolerated by you. 'Tis very strange."

"Excuse me," she said, interrupting him. "I see my grandfather." And she swept away, putting her arm into the old gentleman's with something of the true love-light in her eyes.

"Pshaw!" Jennings said, scratching a match for his pipe and stalking into the outer room.

"She runs after him, but lets me alone. A pretty sweetheart for me, when dozens would die for my favor. I'm a fool, a damn fool! But, ah! Karl Kranz, who wins? Who has the seven spot?" And he chuckled to himself and smiled between the puffs of his fantastic pipe.

"Here, boy," he said, pulling a letter from his waistcoat; "take this immediately and hand it to the coachman."

"Mr. Karl Kranz,
"Waterloo,
"Upper Canada,"

the boy read as he walked away, and then he examined his coin, smiling when he saw it was a shilling and not two pence.

At Waterloo this Saturday Karl was in the store. The customers were still discussing Gustav's calamity and gave Karl a good share of sympathy, for, though they did not know definitely what was lost, they knew that, whatever it was, it had broken his heart. Johanna, as usual, formed the centre of the group, and, after bewailing Gustav's fate, said, importantly:

"My folks have been a-visiting some very haughty man in York. Gretchen says he has a wonderful house, drives horses, and has plenty of money. His name is Captain King, a friend of Colonel Jennings — very intimate, I should

judge. She says she's at parties and balls and what not."

"But I thought you didn't approve of this," Karl said, interrupting her, with bitterness in his tone.

"Ah, neither I do; but then when it's done it's done, and I might as well be glad as sad over it, and only mourn for the next that is to come."

"When are they coming back?" he continued, fixing his eyes on Johanna. "On Monday?"

"Monday," the good woman said, coughing affectedly. "Miss Gretchen is to fetch me a parasol, and Johann a new neck-cloth, and you—I forget what."

"Ah, me—nothing," Karl said, with a forced smile. "When is Jennings coming back?"

"Oh, the Lord knows what his highness is up to. He's mighty fine, but a trifle too haughty for me and Johann. I take it he likes Miss Gretchen."

"What makes you think so?" Karl questioned, earnestly.

"Oh, he's always hanging about and smiling at her whenever he can."

"I thought he never went there."

"Oh, bless you, he boards there. You haven't any show at all now."

Karl bit his lip impatiently and glanced at Johann, who was pushing his way through the smoking group at the door.

"Paper's here," Johann said, with glee; "all for me, but I guess the missus would like me to share up. It's got a piece in about Colonel Jennings's wonderful writin'."

"About what?" Karl exclaimed.

"About somethin' fine he writ."

"Jennings writing!" he questioned, incredulously. "Let me see — Grecêron, Grecêron," he read, over and over.

"Yah," said Johann, grinning. "It's a book or somethin'. It's French, Jeremy's larned gal says."

"It isn't very clear," Karl continued, reading. "I take it it's a critical piece on something. Praises Jennings up all right. I never knew he wrote." And an expression of bitterness crossed his face. "It's news to me, Johann."

"Me likewise. I must be goin' home, for it's time for revelations."

"Revelations!" Karl exclaimed. "I've had mine. Good-night. Grecêron," he said to himself. "I will write it down. Grecêron, Grecêron."

Shortly after, when the store was nearly empty and Karl was covering up the last shelf, the door opened slowly and a small figure, dressed

in a cloak, stepped in and paused. Turning round, Karl stood in amazement, exclaiming, slowly, "Delia!"

"Yes," she said, springing to him, "I am here."

"Wherever did you come from?" he continued, drawing her into the doorway of the inner room. "I thought you were visiting friends at York." Delia did not speak. "How cold you are," he exclaimed, seeing her lips tremble. "Come, sit down, and I will get you a stein of toddy."

"Oh, do," she cried, the tears starting down her cheeks; "for my heart's as cold as my hand."

"Why, what's the matter?" he said, handing her the stein, for she was weeping. "What under heaven is the matter?"

"Nothing," she replied, steadying herself. "I came to comfort you, for I heard you had lost your drama."

"Don't speak of it," he whispered. "It's dead. Let it alone."

"Where is my brother?" she continued, staring at Karl with wide eyes.

"At York."

"At York? There's a girl watching for him there, who is going to sue him for breach of promise, but—I mustn't tell. I came here to

get some money from him. He hasn't given me a cent for months. I'm a beggar, Karl. I'm an outcast." And she caught hold of his sleeve desperately. "Listen to me. I'm a beggar outcast."

"Nonsense," he said, freeing himself. "He is a villain."

"Oh, no," she whispered, holding up her small white finger; "don't say that. But couldn't you love me just a little—just a little bit?"

"Why, yes," he stammered, confusedly; "of course I could. Love you as my sister."

"Oh, no," she sobbed, violently. "As a sweetheart, a wife. Do love me as a wife!"

"Don't be foolish, Delia. I cannot. I can't love two."

"Ah!" she cried, squeezing her small, white finger-nails into the palms of her hands, "it is that devil of a Gretchen. I'll——"

"Hush!" he said, angrily. "Don't dare to say it!"

"That devil!" she hissed.

"Be quiet. You are not yourself. Come, I will take you to your brother."

"That devil!" she hissed again. "Don't you love me, Karl? I shall die if you do not. You are my brain, my heart, my life. I worship you. Do love me a little and marry me."

"Stop, Delia," he said, severely, taking her arm and drawing her to the door. "Don't talk any more till we reach your brother's house."

But Delia would talk and weep, and, as fate would have it, Johanna met them near the church and glanced at Karl as she passed with the eye of a disapproving parent.

"Now see what you have done," he said to Delia, impatiently. "She heard you going on."

"Do love me," she said, clinging to him then and there. "Do marry me. I will scream if you push me away, and then that old woman will come back."

The blood rushed to Karl's forehead. He was dumfounded, but fortunately Delia took a better mood and he was able to pull and persuade her to walk. Reaching the lodge gate, the keeper sprang out at them like a tiger, shouting: "Keep off there!"

Karl explained who Delia was, but the man still refused.

"You must," Karl said, realizing his position.

"I must not," was the rough reply.

"I say you will," he continued, seizing the keeper by the shoulders. "You will, my man." He caught him firmly and shoved him into the lodge, holding the door. "Run and open the gate," he called to the terrified Delia. "It's bolted on the left bar." She obeyed, and then

stood calling to him to come. Making a fast run, he reached her, lifted her through, and bolted the inner bolt before the lodge-keeper came up to them.

Knocking loudly at the door, Karl brought a red and angry servant.

"This is Colonel Jennings's sister, Miss Delia Jennings," he said, firmly. "She is not well. Care for her till the master's return."

The woman looked at Delia carefully, holding the dip close to her face. "Some kind of likeness," she growled, opening the door wider. "What's the name again?"

"Delia," exclaimed the terrified girl. "Good-by, Karl. Good-by, my love."

"Good-by," he said, closing the door. "Good-by."

Returning to the gate, he was surprised to see that the keeper had left. Opening it, he glanced out, saw no one, so moved close to the shadow of the lodge. Suddenly there was a smashing of glass, and two bits struck his forehead and a third his neck. In an instant he felt the hot blood trickling down his face onto his neck-cloth. His head reeled, but he managed to stagger to the road. Leaning against a tree to wipe the blood out of his eyes, he heard the lodge-keeper laugh and realized what had happened. "The fiend!" he said, clinch-

ing his fists. "He knows me; he is his master's right hand. Jennings will pay him for this."

The old Abbot exclaimed as he saw Karl enter the store, and at once produced some black cobwebs.

"A bad gash," he said, laying them in the wounds. "Some foul play."

"Yes," Karl gasped. "I'll have a return match with that Jennings fiend some day."

"You'd be my son if you did," the old man said, hobbling after todody. "And I'll be your father and help you." Karl looked at him amazed and then fell back in a swoon.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CITY OF THE DEAD.

KARL was astir early on Monday morning, for he always set the little shop to rights after its crowd of Saturday night loungers and carousers. He remembered, too, in his inner mind, that Gretchen would return this evening, and, as she had been absent so long, he thought it not improbable that she would drop in to see them.

The Abbot was early astir, too, but as he was still busied over his press and a second leaflet, he did not come into the shop. So Karl worked alone, dusting here, straightening there, and putting a few new articles in the show window, until the sun shone bright. At its first full rays he put out the candles and opened the door, when such a breath of scented air came to him that he smiled and welcomed it as a guest.

At eight o'clock the coach called, and Karl, half expectant, took the bag and hurriedly sorted the letters. Yes, there were two for him. He opened the first one with almost trembling eagerness and read:

"DEAR FRIEND KARL:

"I have been thinking of Waterloo and you and the Abbot, in the midst of my dizzy whirl. My thoughts toward you are kind, but full of envy, for I am tired of it all.

"Colonel Jennings's friends are kind, but do not seem to be friends of whole cloth, as my Waterloo friends are. The rougher coat and hand are more pleasing to me than the velvet and soft palm.

"This is just a line to convey my thoughts of well-wishing to you, and I may say I have sent many besides on the wind.

"Constantly your friend,

"GRETCHEN GLEBE."

Karl's eyes were full of pride and joy and he kissed the little missive unawares.

"From Jennings," he said, picking up the other. "What has he got to say, I wonder?"

Tearing it open, he read:

"DEAR KRANZ:

"Just a line to tell you of my good luck. Gretchen is mine. We are engaged. Who wins? Who has the seven spot now? Can you wish us joy?

"Yours,

"WALTER WRENN JENNINGS."

Suddenly the light faded from Karl's eyes. He staggered as he comprehended Jennings's

words. "Good God!" he cried, burying his head in his hands, "I have lost! I am lost!"

The old Abbot, entering the store, found him thus, and opened his small eyes wide, raising his shaggy brows.

"Are you acting your play?" he said, snarlingly. "It's a tragedy, I guess." And passing out to sweep the steps, he left Karl in the same position.

"Still the first act?" he said, re-entering. "It's time for the second. It's seven o'clock."

"Jennings has got her!" Karl gasped, hoarsely. "What shall I do, old Abbot?"

At the question the old man leaned his chin on the broom-handle and said:

"You should have taken that second lily. I told you he'd take her. Didn't the jewels take Marguerite?"

"Jennings can buy jewels, but I cannot."

"Surely the lily is worth more, for I tended it for years, and you recollect she liked the other."

"Yes, but you don't understand," Karl said, desperately. "You don't understand."

"Hum!" grunted the Abbot; "nor you, I guess." And he hobbled away.

"The dates are different," Karl said, comparing the letters. "One is my birthday; the other my death day." And he covered his face in anguish.

Shortly after this Delia entered the store quietly and stole up to him, inquiring about his head.

"What!" he said, starting. "It's burst!"

"My brother will dismiss that lodge keeper," she said, patting his hair. "I know he will."

"Dismiss him!" Karl replied, savagely. "He will be more likely to raise him."

"Oh, dearest," she said, with a frightened look, "you aren't cross, are you, because he won Gretchen?"

Karl compressed his lips until they were white.

"You see, dearie," she continued, fingering the pin in his neckcloth, "they are engaged; so let us be, too. Oh, I would be so happy, I would sing all day and wait on you, and be your slave."

"That would not do," Karl answered, sadly.

"Then I would die for you, wear my fingers to the second joint, and kiss my lips away on your feet and hands."

"Oh, that would not do," he added, abstractedly.

"Then I would die by inches for you, crawl in the dust for you, eat dust. Oh, do marry me! Do cherish and love me, just for one year, one month, one day."

"Oh, Delia, dear," he sighed, looking sorrow-

fully at her, "I will make you happy as my friend, but never——"

"Hum, hum!" the Abbot interposed.
"Hum, hum!"

"You nasty thing!" Delia said, pouting. "I hate you!"

"What act is this," the Abbot said, bitterly;
"the second or last?"

Karl turned very pale and glanced at him; then, gently removing Delia's hands, went into the bedroom and bolted the door.

"Hussy!" hissed the Abbot to Delia. "Go!"

And Delia, weeping wildly, went into the street.

All morning Karl sat on the edge of the bed, sat like a statue of marble; the blue veins on his forehead, standing out full of blood, being the only indications of his life. The Abbot hobbled unnoticed about, and by noon grew anxious.

About one o'clock Karl rose, gathered a few odds and ends, and, with "Goethe" and a small bag of coins, deposited them in his carpet-bag. Slipping out through the side-door, he cut across the fields and arrived at the crossroad just before the coach was due.

"You look like a ghost," a voice said at his elbow. "Are you sick?"

"Yes," he replied, startled to see Johanna.

"What's the matter? Did the little wench cheat you?"

"No; oh, no," he whispered. "Tell Miss Gretchen I've gone away off. Say good-by to her forever." And he turned from Johanna to hide his grief.

"Lord pity him!" she murmured, her own eyes full of tears. "I never thought it before. He must have loved her mightily." And she waved her blue apron at the coach until it was out of sight.

When the York revellers returned it was nearly dark, so Jennings left his friends at the crossroad, the Misses Zoellner soon after leaving in turn. As Gretchen passed the little store she glanced in, but it was quite empty.

When Jennings drew up at the door of The Villa, he was surprised to see a small, dark figure by the door.

"What, scapegoat!" he said, severely, on discovering who it was. "What do you want here?" And he shook her violently.

"Oh, Walter, don't, don't!" she cried. "I want to see you."

"To see me?" he hissed. "What for?"

"I want money, Walter. I am starved."

"Here, take this," he said, handing her a gold piece, "and be off. Drive her to York

after a relay," he shouted to the groom. "Do you hear?"

The driver, cursing Delia audibly, shoved her into the dark coach and drove to the stables.

"Poor little babe unborn!" she sobbed, and was terrified by the sound of her own voice. The cab was dark and cold, and she in great bodily pain. She clutched the gold piece and wept and laughed over it alternately. Some time in the long night she was thrown against the opposite seat, and, waking, she heard voices and saw a light. They were at the Midway Inn and Gustavia held the lantern.

"Poor child!" she said, lifting Delia out. "She seemeth ill."

At which the driver shrugged his shoulders and turned back to Waterloo.

"Who payeth for her here?" silent Wilhelm said, slowly.

"Oh, trouble not," his wife replied, helping her to the house. "The Lord rewards."

Entering the warm room, she seated Delia by the fire and rubbed her benumbed limbs.

"I doubt her character," Wilhelm said, breaking silence the second time. "Dost not thou?"

"Be not doubtful," Gustavia replied. "And the money shall be taken from what the lad left

for the poor—the young lad Kranz. He left it in that cup.”

“So be it,” her husband said, shaking the cup.

At the mention of Karl, Delia opened her eyes and gazed, like a bewildered child, first at Gustavia and then at the fire.

“Fear not,” said Gustavia, holding drink to her. “Thou art safe.” And Delia, realizing this, closed her swollen eyes.

Good Gustavia, the angels attended her that night. She was a true mother. Though childless of her own flesh, she was a dear mother to hundreds of different flesh, a dear guide to hundreds of the one spirit life, and these rose up to bless her from afar and near.

Karl, arriving at York, went to the smallest inn, where he took the cheapest roof-room. On Wednesday morning he intended to start for Boston, in spite of the innkeeper’s persuasions and presentiments that he would die on the way.

He had just finished his frugal meal in his room on Tuesday night and was counting out his money for the innkeeper, when a moth flew into the candle-flame and fell upon the bare table. At once he compared the insect to himself, the flame to his love, and the white candle to Gretchen. For some moments he sat watching his sad panorama.

Thus it was he did not hear a step on the creaky stair nor see the door open.

"Karl, Karl!" said Delia, rushing to him. "Now you will love me."

"Is it you, Delia?" he said, coming out of his dream. "Sit down."

"Don't worry or be cross or sad," she said, in an unexpected tone. "I have not come to beg to-night. I did not mean what I just said, for my love is dead. You could not resurrect it if you tried. I have had my first death. My soul and love are dead."

"Take a little brandy," he said, with concern. "You are wandering. You are not well."

"I am as well as any dead woman," she replied, handing back the flask. "My brother shook me and you killed me." Karl started. "But I have one thing to say," she whispered, bending toward him. "Just one thing more. Listen. You know, God knows, I loved my brother, I adored him, but he shook me off as a dog would a rat. I tried to cling to you, but you were too high, your manhood was a wall I could not climb, so I fell back to die. I know your nobleness. It is far above the nobleness of kin. I am not worthy to kiss your hand, but I will for the last time." And she took his hand and kissed it tenderly, he gazing at her in bewilderment. "But I have one thing to

say. Will you love me one instant for saying it?"

"I will and for longer," he said, hoarsely. "Say it, for I will love you."

At the words her eyes lit up like stars, her face was transformed, and her whole being radiant.

"I am happy, happy!" she cried, softly. "Don't disturb me!"

He moved toward her, but she motioned him away.

"Now I am myself," she continued, in hushed tones. "I will go on." And, strangely enough, her eye faded and her face took on its usual wistfulness. "You saved me from hell by that moment's joy," she whispered. "Do you know it?"

"I don't understand," he said, finding voice.

"Some day you will. Now listen to me—listen. Your play was not burned. It was stolen—stolen by my brother, who hired the highwaymen."

"What!" cried Karl, starting up. "Not burned?"

"No; stolen, and stolen by him, my brother!"

Karl sat as though stupefied.

"I found it out when I was in Waterloo," she continued. "One of the men he hired came for his pay, and when he found he was away,

told me the secret if I would give him his gold watch, and I did."

"What was his name? What did he look like? How could I catch him?"

"I don't know. Have a lawsuit, and then you may."

"A lawsuit?"

"Yes, and catch Walter and the others. Your Gretchen might have to be in it, too."

"What!" Karl exclaimed. "Does she know?"

"Oh, no; but I meant she would be cut up over Walter. You see, I have her between two fires. If you have the suit, you ruin her lover; if you don't, you let a villain have her. Ah! I swore I'd make her ears tingle, and I can."

"Don't," said Karl, pained at her levity. "Tell me more of this man."

"Not to-night," she said, rising. "I have another duty to perform, just one more."

"I will go with you then."

"Not to-night. I would rather be alone. You have saved my soul from hell, but you cannot save me. See!" And she held up a small knife. "I came here to murder you, but you gave in and loved me. Oh, that moment! It is all the heaven I shall know."

"Delia, you are not yourself. Stay yet awhile."

"No, no! I must perform my duty even before loving you and obeying you. Good-night! Good-by!"

He stood silent, watching her move down the stairs. Something urged him to follow, but again a hand detained him. As for her assertion of murdering him, he scorned it; and as for her allusion to destroying herself, he did not think of it.

"Poor child!" he said, with paternal pathos in his voice. "She is dejected."

Returning to his own room, he could not rest. His brain was in a mad whirl about Jennings, his manuscript, Gretchen, the lawsuit, and Delia. At length, going out into the night, he walked down Yonge Street toward the dock. As he advanced he discerned something in the distance, a group of men standing under a lamp-post. Hastening to them, he heard them muttering together and thought it must be some row.

"She's dead," one said, in louder tones.

"She's deader than her great-grandsire."

At the words Karl shivered and pushed himself into the crowd.

"What's up?" he said, hoarsely. "Who's dead?"

"Can't find out," a gruff fellow said, uncovering the face. "Ever see it yourself?"

"Delia!" Karl exclaimed, bending over her. "Delia Jennings," he added, to the astonished men. "Sister of Colonel Jennings of Waterloo, cousin of Governor Hunter, of King Street."

One man made a note of the name, and they all uttered a low exclamation of surprise when they heard the Governor mentioned.

"Help me carry her to the undertaker's," he continued, covering her face again. "She is a friend of mine. I will see to her."

Several men offered their assistance, and together they lifted her and carried her across the street.

"My God!" Karl exclaimed, leaving the shop an hour later, "I have done this!"

In the morning, pale and haggard, he interviewed the Governor, who refused to have Delia buried from his home and washed his hands of the affair.

"Her brother is one person; she another," he said, politely bowing Karl out of the door. "Good-day, young sir."

But Karl was not to be downed. He gave orders that the body be sent to the Governor's and engaged the clergyman to officiate at the funeral. The Governor was very angry and would have turned the coffin away had not Jennings himself been there.

"Deuced luck!" he said, looking at his sister.

"She always chose a bad time." And surely this was a bad time, for guests were arriving from Montreal and Quebec, many of whom left when they saw the crepe, but as some remained Delia was not unattended by the great.

Karl, standing by the door, saw Jennings in black, looking as black as his suit. He saw everyone; saw death mock life with its silent sermon and life mock death with its sham. His soul was torn with hatred and remorse as he followed the hearse with Jennings, feeling like his accomplice in the murder of this girl.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE LUCKY JENNINGS.

IN Waterloo the death of Delia was the cause of much comment and gossip. The Misses Zoellner gave their version of it, gossiping and speculating about the cause of the tragedy. Miss Mina gave the exact reverse and was positive of her interpretation, for she was a psychologist. Gretchen gave no version at all, for she knew. Although she was shocked at Delia's end, she could not help being glad that her days were over before the birth of her child.

Jennings, returning from York, wore a long face and attended church services during the week. In Waterloo he received much sympathy; indeed, was idolized to some extent. Thus for the second time he became the town hero.

Gretchen, with her usual tenderness toward suffering, was sweet and loving to him, caressing him and smoothing away the false wrinkles. At this he was inwardly delighted and contemplated the time when he would have subdued

her to this submissive mood for always. Yes, she should be his ideal wife, his refined slave. He would put her at the head of his table, glittering in diamonds, and then majestically disdain her as a rare yet usual thing. She should be a vine clinging to his side, a sensitive plant shrivelling at his very frown. "Ah, joyous time!" he said to himself; "ah, joyous time of married days, when I am the head of a house and the master of a masterful woman! That will be manhood and real living!"

With legs crossed and arms folded, he sat in Colonel Glebe's study, in a large chair, smoking. Gretchen, as usual, was amusing him with her wit while she darned stockings according to her grandsire's order.

"You are a perfect picture," he said, puffing out the sweet smoke slowly. "If I were only an artist I should paint you. By Jove, it will be a mystery if you are not besieged in London by artists, for you are dark, unlike our girls, and there's a certain swing to you that would be popular with titled men."

"But I shall not have time," she replied. "I will be working, fulfilling my mission."

"Working! How absurd!" he laughed. "How very absurd!"

"But I mean it. I am not going to be an ornament."

"We will see. If I choose you to be, you must. English girls always act according to their superior's commands."

"Indeed!" she said, tossing her head prettily. "Well, they may, but I shall not, for I'm a Canadian. I will form a Canadian Club for girls, and teach them how to rule themselves."

"You are very absurd!" he exclaimed, indulgently. "Why, if a chap gives you everything you want, do you want to work?"

"If I said to you, sit down and I will cook your meals for you and keep you alive, would you sit and never want to work?"

"Indeed, yes; if you said it I should."

"You would not, should not, anyway. If all Englishmen were like you, I should be sorry for England."

"Oh, pshaw! don't let's quarrel. Come over to the fire. When you are in London, out of this rude wilderness, you will become acclimated and be very obedient."

"You must let me fulfil my mission then, for some one higher than you gave it to me."

"You would not work among the rough, dirty, filthy people, would you? How could you?"

"Easily, easily! I should enjoy it, because I would be doing something."

"Oh, nonsense!" he roared. "You are too delightfully absurd for anything!"

While Jennings and Gretchen were thus amusing themselves before the fire, Karl sat in the little store, cold and alone. He had been too busy in thought to remember the fire, and it was not until his teeth chattered that he re-kindled it.

"I am certain it was he," he said, pulling an old newspaper out of his coat pocket. "It must be." And he hunted up and down the columns. "Yes, here it is: Walter Wrenn Jennings. Wrote a treatise or something, I can't make out, on Grecêron—I suppose, Gretchen transposed to cover identity. I'll have the law after him and no mistake."

Putting his hand to his head, he felt the plaster on it. "Devil!" he exclaimed. "I'll make him pay for this too. I'd have a lawyer from York if I only had money. That's where he'll catch me, for how can I work against his salaried gang? There's the Abbot's money," he continued, in a whisper. "I wonder if he'd lend it to me? No, no; he saves it out of his bread money."

Moving to the chest where this money was kept, he found it open, and was in the act of taking it out when he checked himself. Knocking loudly on the Abbot's door, he com-

pelled him to answer, and before the old man could say anything he pulled him violently to the chest, saying:

"I know how to fix Jennings. I'll have a lawsuit. Lend me that money, won't you?"

"My money!" the old man cried. "My blood money!"

"I'll pay it all back within six months. I swear I will."

"Touch that and you're a dead man!" the Abbot hissed. "A dead man!"

"Then I can't catch Jennings. He stole my manuscript. I found it all out. He burned Gustav's coach and stole it. It was never burned."

"No matter. That's for your revenge, not for my blood money."

"Then he can go free and marry Gretchen? It's too horrible!"

"Eh, marry her? No, stop him."

"Lend me your money and I will, I swear."

The old man was silent, then moved to the chest and slowly drew out the sock.

"Do it," he said, handing it to Karl. "Save her from him. It is yours."

Karl's eyes filled with tears. He looked at the sock and then at the Abbot. "I will repay you double fold!" he exclaimed. "I will repay you truly."

"Tut! Save her!"

Putting on his coat and high boots, late as it was, Karl went out to see Gustav, to tell him his discovery and give him a letter and some gold for a certain Mr. Beuler, a York lawyer. As was to be expected, Gustav entered into the suit heartily and promised to be an important witness.

With a heart full of hope he returned to Glebeholm. He felt he must speak to Gretchen, disclose all, and then she would be prepared for the suit, should she be called upon to be a witness for Jennings. Taking the grass, he reached the window without a sound, and there he saw Jennings and Gretchen, happy before the fire.

The red glow fell on the two, making Gretchen still more beautiful and Jennings handsomer. Such happiness seemed to reign, he was loath in his heart to disturb it. Besides, when he looked steadfastly at Jennings, he could not bring himself to believe that he was guilty of such a crime.

"Delia may have been dreaming," he said, with sudden thought. "She may have said it out of malice."

For a time he watched the two, and then, unable to banish the doubt in his mind about Delia, he turned disconsolately away, murmuring: "I will wait."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE GREATER WATERLOO.

JOHANNA, for the past month—in fact, since she had met Karl on the crossroad—had been guessing the secret of his love for Gretchen. At last she decided to try several experiments to see if her young mistress had any thought of him. Accordingly, she set Karl's lily where it would be directly before her eyes when she awoke in the morning, and not the bowl of orchids that Jennings had sent. The first morning Gretchen changed them, returning the lily to the window-ledge, but the second morning she left it before her, and the third morning was admiring it when Johanna entered.

"Isn't it beautiful?" she said, smiling to Gretchen. "It is so simple and pure, like a baby."

"Yes," replied Gretchen, feeling its soft, new flower. "It is beautiful."

"When I was young, the sayin' was, know your lover by the flowers he sends you. Such a flower meant so and so, and such another one something different. The lily, I recollect, meant purity of soul, a spotless heart."

"Indeed," said Gretchen, interested. "Well, I think it is true of Karl—at least, I used to think so. What does an orchid mean?"

"Let me see," Johanna pondered. "If my wits are correct, I should recall that it meant something like itself—very fine outside, but perhaps not so good inside."

"Really, you are hard on Colonel Jennings. Don't you like him? You know, I have noticed lately that you don't seem as friendly as you used to be."

"Oh, I like him fairly; but, of course, he's not your equal."

"How?"

"In every way. May be he's got money and all that, but if you was asking me, I'd say choose again."

"How did you choose Johann?" Gretchen said, laughing.

"Oh, me!" Johanna exclaimed, rolling her eyes. "I didn't choose him by his flowers, anyway, for he never sent me even a cowslip, and it's as well he didn't. I take it Providence provided him, for I was very lonely after my folks in the old land. You know, there's nothin' like catching the wounded bird. Then he was good to his folk, and that allers captures me. Somethin' like the boy across the way."

"Yes, Karl is good to his sire," Gretchen

said, thoughtfully. "He has a good name. Gustav says he's the salt of the earth."

"It was helpin' that wench, the master's sister, he got hurt up at the Villa."

"Helping Delia?"

"Yes."

"He is in love with her, Johanna."

"Not he."

"Why, I am sure he is."

"She with him most like, but he with another body."

"Who?"

"Well, as you've asked me so straight, I'll tell you as straight. He's in love with yourself."

"Oh, no, no. You're wrong there," Gretchen laughed. "You are wrong this time, my dear old prophetess."

And she kissed the old woman for the first time in her life, which made Johanna her faithful slave ever after.

Gretchen tried to push aside Johanna's words, but they clung to her tenaciously.

In the evening Jennings came as usual, to sit before the fire, smoke, and play with Gretchen. Formerly the old Colonel or Miss Mina had been in the room to check him, but lately the Colonel had been worried over business and Miss Mina engaged with her "tormentor," as

she said; but everyone knew that she loved to be tormented.

To-night, however, the Colonel was in good spirits and helped Jennings off with his cloak.

"You are late," he said to him, "but just as welcome. I dare say two dark eyes are watching for you in there."

Jennings glanced in the room, but saw only Peter Erb and his sweetheart.

"Just walk in," the old gentleman said. "I'll call Gretchen."

As she came down the stairs he noticed she was not as bright as usual. He caught her at the bottom, saying: "He is here; cheer up, little one." At which she smiled and took his arm, pulling him reluctantly into the room.

Peter and Mina sat on either side of the table and lamp, as usual. If they had been ordinary lovers, the lamp might have been an obstacle; but as they were pensive lovers, sitting back in their chairs with only an occasional word, the lamp was convenient, especially to Peter, who often dozed to the monotonous click of his sweetheart's knitting-needles.

"Did you hear the news?" he said to the Colonel and Gretchen.

"No," they replied at once.

"Karl Kranz wrote a drama and sent it to York by Gustav, and it was burned in the coach

—at least, supposedly so. Sit down! Of course, young Kranz was broken-hearted, but now it turns out it was stolen and not burned. The robbers stole it and carried it to York, where it was handed over to the guilty party.” Here he stopped for breath, and Jennings, in the corner, gasped.

“The lawyers are on the track; at least, Mr. Beuler, for the Kranz lad posted Gustav off at once with papers and money.”

“Mr. Beuler,” Jennings noted.

“Where did he get the money to engage Beuler?” the old Colonel asked, unmoved.

“Oh, I suppose he had it by him. He’s a smart fellow, that. I always liked him.”

“Of course, you’d say that now,” Miss Mina interjected. “You always like men that are before the public.”

“Who is the guilty party?” Gretchen inquired. “Has he any clew?”

“Oh, yes. He is almost certain, but wouldn’t like to say just now who it is.”

“Come and sit down, Colonel Jennings,” the old Colonel said, remembering the visitor. “I’d forgotten all about you.”

Peter started when he saw Jennings, but managed to control himself.

“I have been reading a letter,” Jennings said, calmly. “It’s a business letter. I will answer

it immediately, if I may be excused for a moment. I just got it to-night."

"Certainly," said the Colonel. "Gretchen, take Colonel Jennings to my office."

Gretchen obeyed and went with him into the hall.

"Dearest," he said, squeezing her hand with almost brutal strength, "you will excuse me?"

"Oh, yes," she replied, nervously. "Come back as soon as you can."

Jennings hastily wrote to Mr. Beuler, offering him triple money to take the case, and also sent letters to the three other lawyers in York, engaging their full services up to a certain date.

"I'll catch you in your own loop, Kranz," he hissed, sealing the letters. "Give me two days to do it, and then I'll give you two days to die."

Returning to the parlor, he seated himself before the fire near Gretchen, and began an undertoned conversation, in the hope of stirring Peter and his sweetheart. Mina took the hint and coughed to call Peter out of his doze, but Peter was immovable. So she went out alone, sniffing the air in her wrath.

Jennings frowned at Peter, and said aside to Gretchen: "The old fool!" Then he turned around as Peter had opened his eyes, saying: "That's right, Father Erb, don't desert us."

This was a slight slip, like many Gretchen had

heard him make before, but until to-night she had not watched or noticed his small deceits. She opened her eyes at the change in his expression between the time he had said "The old fool," and the last speech.

"You would make a fine actor," she said, lightly. "Why don't you play in your own dramas?"

"I will, if Gretchen will take her part with me."

"It would be novel; perhaps she may." Gretchen said with sarcasm. "She never can bear a quiet, pent-up life."

At this Jennings bit his mustache and moved nearer to her.

"Dearest," he whispered, "I long for our wedding-day. You must settle it soon. It must be next month, for I have business in London."

"Beautiful London!" she exclaimed, recalling Captain King's pictures; "I would love to be there."

"Well, say the second week in December. The twelfth. That's a Thursday."

"Yes," said Gretchen, absent-mindedly. "That will do for me."

"Dearest," he whispered, again taking her hand to kiss it. "You are my——"

"What's the time?" Peter said, shrilly.

"Damn you!" Jennings muttered, pulling out his watch. "It's half past nine."

"Only nine," he whispered to Gretchen. "It's getting late, Peter; it's half past nine."

"Don't say that," Gretchen said, surprised. "It's only nine, Peter."

"I thought so," came the sleepy reply.

Jennings's lips were purple with compression.

"You are a goose," he said, with suppressed wrath.

After a pause, in which he bit his mustache short at each end, he rose abruptly and left the room without a word. When he had gone Peter raised his lids and beckoned to Gretchen.

"Do you want to know who stole Kranz's manuscript?"

"Yes," she said, full of apprehension.

"Well, promise to be calm and contained, not to make a scene. Quietly tell your grand-sire and then await developments. Will you promise all these things?"

"Yes."

"Well, it was that man, your lover."

"Colonel Jennings!" she gasped.

"Yes, he."

"Oh, Peter, you must be mistaken!"

"Perhaps. Now remember your promise. Await developments. Time will tell. I only speak to you privately to warn you."

Gretchen was silent. She gazed into the fire with fixed eyes.

During Jennings's love scene there had been a lone figure outside by the window. Karl had come the second time to tell Gretchen of her lover's deceit, for to-night he was positive of it.

He had seen Jennings kiss her hand, had seen him frown at Peter, and he had seen Gretchen smile. How happy she looked! Her mouth was curved and dimpled, her face without a line of care. As Karl fixed his eyes upon her, her expression of happiness and hope imbedded itself in his mind.

"Can I spoil it all?" he questioned in his heart. "Can I sweep away the love and leave her face pale and worn? Can I put grief upon those lips and fill the dimples with tears?"

His heart beat fast. He was torn to decide. Move now he must or never. "O God!" he cried, looking up into the sky above him, "how can I do it? How can I hurt her so much?"

In his anguish of choosing he sank upon the frozen ground and fixed his eyes on the dark trees, where, in the shadow of his imagination, he saw Gretchen's face, pale and tear-stained.

"That!" he exclaimed. "I, do that when I love her! No, no!" And, rising, he wiped the drops of perspiration from his face.

"There she is, her happy self," he whispered, looking in at the window again. "I will leave her so."

With bent head and burning heart he retraced his steps to the gate, where for some moments he lingered by the shrubs.

Across the way another figure lurked in the shadow. Seeing Karl, it moved across the road and from the other side of the shrubs took note of him. Then, in the stillness, a shot sounded. Another followed, and Karl fell forward on his knees. The cunning marksman threw the weapon toward him and came cleverly near. Then, as the noise of voices came from the house, it disappeared.

All the inmates of the Colonel's house ran out, alarmed at the sound of a shot.

"What!" said Peter, raising Karl. "Shot? Johann, hold the lantern."

The light showed a wound in the right side and another in the hand.

"Suicide," the old Colonel said, picking up the weapon. See this!

"No; foul play!" Peter said, excitedly. "Call the Abbot."

The old man hobbled over and lifted his son without a word, Peter and Johann helping him.

"What was he doing here?" the old Colonel

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said to Gretchen. "Spying, I suppose. Spies need to be shot."

Gretchen was silent.

"Don't be a fool," he said, noting this. "Control your woman's sympathies." But still she was silent.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE NEW MANUSCRIPT.

"WHAT act is this?" the old Abbot said, holding Karl a mug of water. "The last, I suppose."

Karl moistened his lips and leaned back upon the pillows.

"The doctor took most all the gold. I guess the lawsuit will be postponed."

Karl writhed in pain.

"Here's a letter from your lawyer, too. Says he's too busy. So the lawsuit's off, I reckon."

"Don't!" Karl whispered, faintly and brokenly. "You will get your—money—soon."

"Likely, and likely that devil gets caught. Two likelies." And the Abbot shrugged his shoulders, as he hobbled into the store.

"The last act and the last scene!" Karl said to himself, as he fell asleep. "The last act and the last scene!" he whispered, as he awoke. "My life is played"

"Why not?" And he raised his head as if a sudden idea had inflamed his brain. "Why

not?" he repeated. "I'll write it all. It will be half tragedy—perhaps all tragedy." And he clasped his side, where the bullet had been extracted. "I may die without writing it," he continued, hoarsely. "But God forbid!"

"Hand me some paper," he said to the old Abbot, toward night.

"Paper!" the old man exclaimed. "There."

"A pencil, now."

"There."

And to his astonishment he saw Karl scribble a line, then another, and so on half down the page.

"That will do," he said, wearily, folding it and tucking it under his pillow. "Put out the light, please."

At the same time Gretchen, upon her bed, was tossing to and fro in mental agony. She had been shocked, torn asunder by the revelation of the past three days. She still doubted Peter and Gustav, and at the same time doubted her lover. Doubt is well called the canker of the soul, for in her it ate deeply and silently. Toward morning she fell asleep; fell into a dream. She saw London, its shops and busy streets, and rode through the beautiful park with Jennings. She was very happy and he seemed to please her every moment.

This affected her strangely when she awoke,

and she set the faded lily on the window-sill and toyed with the fresh bowl of orchids. She took the fading of the lily to be a sort of finger of fate, pointing to the fresh flowers and the right lover. She firmly decided then and there to forget Karl and trust Jennings, who told a probable story of Delia's madness and influence over Karl. But, alas! fickle soul! It would revolve, and in the circle Karl was as well as Jennings. Her mind, uncomfortable, would at times touch one, and then the other.

"Colonel Jennings wants to see you," Johanna said, coming up to where she was writing a letter. "Don't be downcast. It will come out all right."

"I hope so," she replied, sadly. "You'll be true to me, any way, won't you?"

"That I will," Johanna said, fervently. "That I am."

"I just ran in to give you a little gift," Jennings said, standing very tall. "I have had it several weeks and have always forgotten to bring it to you."

"You are very kind," she replied, opening the box. "What beautiful pearls!"

"Just a trifle," he said, kindly. "Just a taste of London."

Gretchen brightened as she sat down beside him.

"I must run, dearest," he said, importantly. "I have business in York. I will be back in three days. Can you spare me?"

"I think so," she replied, gazing at the pearls. "These are beautiful."

"Only a taste of what you shall have in London."

"Did you hear about Karl Kranz?" she said, after a pause.

"No; what about him?"

"He was shot at our gate last night by a highwayman, who thought he had money, I suppose, coming from such a large house."

"Poor chap!" Jennings said, with concern. "Is he fatally wounded?"

"I don't really know. Take him this note, will you, on your way out, and inquire for him yourself."

Jennings squirmed, then said, suddenly: "I must go. Good-by, dear heart."

"Good-by," she said, standing on tiptoe to kiss him. "Come back soon."

Following him with her eyes to the gate and street, she was disappointed to see that he opened the shop-door and threw the note in, without inquiring for Karl. If she could have followed him farther, she would have seen him turn in at the Misses Zoellner's, opening the door and walking in without a knock.

There he found Miss Zoellner alone, and from the expression of his face it would have been judged that this was what he wanted.

"How good to see you again!" she said, from her couch. "Excuse my not rising."

"Certainly, my dear," he replied, familiarly, pulling a chair close to her couch.

"Have you come to take me for a drive, Walter?" she said, with a sly look. "I hope so."

"I have come to do anything you say," he replied, running his fingers over the blue veins in her hand. "What will you?"

"Let me look at you," she said, smiling. "I haven't seen a man since I saw you the last time, and even if I had seen thousands I should not see one like you."

"Oh, flatterer!" he said, pinching her wrinkled cheek. "I wish there were more like you in this world."

"Do you, Walter?" she said, coyly. "How kind of you to say so!"

"Will you grant me a favor?" he said, uneasily. "A small one."

"The largest one you can ask."

"Well, I have to go down to York on business. I'm really strapped. Lend me some money, like an angel."

"Why, certainly, certainly, you poor dear."

She opened her kerchief and produced a pocket-book. Opening it, she said, smiling dryly:

"How much will you have, my dear?"

"How much have you there?"

"Seven notes of one hundred pounds, each bearing ten per cent."

"Let me have it all," he said, holding out his hand. "I will pay fifty per cent. for the loan, and return it compound, with the principal, within a month."

"All of it?" she said, astonished.

"Yes; you might as well make a little by it."

And, taking the notes, he added: "Here is my check. I will make it out for principal and interest."

She gazed at him lovingly as he drew out the check, and pondered over his dear signature.

"Are you going to be married soon?" she said, looking up.

"Yes. You have guessed the secret of my love. Is it not a good cause?"

"Well, if I were not Sadie Zoellner, I should say no; but as I am, I say a very good one."

"Thank you," Jennings said, rising. "There are few, alas! like Sadie Zoellner. By the way, I have a bachelor uncle in London. How would you like to be Mrs. Barabbas Jennings?"

"Oh, you naughty boy!"

"Well, I think I can arrange it when I am married and over there."

"When you take your crow home to its nest, eh, silly boy? But I suppose I must call her a dove for your sake."

"Good-by. I will commend you to Uncle Barabbas."

She smiled over the top of her fan and crooked her shrivelled eyes, coquettishly calling: "Good-by, dear boy. Come again."

Reaching the road, Jennings crumpled the notes in his satisfaction. The sound of their stiffened edges was good to his ears. He exclaimed: "Now come with your lawsuit, snipe. I'll buy every lawyer in the country."

Glancing maliciously at Karl's bedroom window as he passed, he hissed again: "Come along with your lawsuit now, snipe!"

But Karl was unconscious of him. His pencil flew as fast as his weakened hands could carry it, and every time his arms tired or his speed slackened he glanced at Gretchen's note before him and went on as if inspired.

The Abbot tried to dissuade him from his plans, but he was persistent and wrote as much as his strength allowed; even more, for often he would swoon after his efforts. The old man saw it all, and in his heart was proud of his son.

In two weeks it was finished, and Karl, weak and pale, struggled to dress himself.

"You are mad!" the Abbot said, seeing him walk as a child. "Be content for another week."

"Too late if I do," he replied, with determination. "She'll be married in three more."

Gustav, proud and pleased, called for Karl with his new coach, and helped him in as tenderly as a child.

"I'll see to him," he said, wagging his head to the anxious Abbot. "He's in good keeping."

Arriving at York, weak and weary, Karl bade Gustav drive him to the best inn.

"The Red Lion!" Gustav exclaimed. "Lots of gold needed there!" But he did as he was bade, and drew up proudly before the door. The innkeeper paid great attention to Karl, seeing his weak condition, and put him in the "bride's chamber," much to Karl's amusement.

The following day Karl sent for Mr. Gosen, the theatre manager, and so impressed this little man that he read "Gretchen" then and there, pronouncing it "superb."

"Can it be staged here?" Karl asked, flushed with joy.

"Hif I only had the actor. Hif you could be the actor, why, I would very soon haf it on."

Karl was silent, then said, with hesitation:

"I will take the part myself."

"Werry goot! I will get the scenerary and haf my peoples ready for this day week."

Karl did not know how he should stand the work, but was determined to do so at all costs. He rested much, and saw Mr. Gosen once a day.

There was just one thing that hindered his improvement, and that was his failure to secure a lawyer. All whom he had interviewed refused on account of business, but really on account of Jennings's gold. However, he set his hopes on his play.

In his weakened condition it was desperately hard work to learn all the business of the stage, which was new to him.

He mastered it, however, as he usually did anything he undertook, and at the last rehearsal, when Mr. Gosen complimented him on his acting, he felt that his most sanguine hopes were about to be realized.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"GRETCHEN."

IN Waterloo Karl's second drama caused much delight among the burghers and speculation among the aristocracy. The old Abbot was pleased and proud of his son, though he rebuked all who came to compliment him on Karl's success.

Gretchen did not hear it, however, until one day she happened to be in the shop when Gustav, who had just returned from York, entered.

"Oh, he's turnin' the city upside down!" he said, slapping his boots with his whip. "Why, all the ladies and men are callin' on him. Sendin' him notes and fine presents. Why, he acts superb, so the theatrical boss says. Takes his part like Sir Somebody Great."

"Like a man," the Abbot growled. "No sirs for him or me."

"Tell me about him," Gretchen said, aside, to the Abbot. "I have not heard."

"Wall, you must have been dead," Gustav

intercepted. "You're in love, though. That's the worst grave I ever got into, and I never want another. Wall, it runs like this. He writ another play after the first that your man stole, and now he's playin' in it, and the public's goin' to see it Saturday night."

Gretchen crimsoned at the reference to Jennings, but allowed Gustav to continue.

"Lord bless us, it's goin' to make a hit."

"What is it called?" she inquired, quietly.

"Ah, a sick name; that's the worst part of it. It's called your name, after you, I suppose."

Gretchen smiled, saying: "When is it to be played for the public?"

"Saturday night, three days after to-morrow, the 10th of December."

"I must go up and see it."

"Too near your weddin'-day. Why, they tells me you're goin' off on the 12th."

"Better take us all."

"Come along," Gretchen replied, good-naturedly.

"As if I'd go. I'd sooner chop wood than be o'er there with them English, that's if they're like that Jennings."

Gretchen colored again, but stood her ground, saying:

"I'm not gone yet, Gustav, so don't sing too soon."

"Hum," said Gustav, turning to the window. "Guess we'll have a set of runs," he continued, "in order to set off the occasion."

Gretchen was full of going to York, and cleverly managed to coax her grandsire to take her, making clothes her excuse. As might be expected, Jennings would not go. He said his sister's death was still with him, and, although he had gone back to red neckcloths and bright vests, he was still in mourning.

"You seem very dull," Gretchen said to him one evening when they were alone. "Is it Delia that troubles you?"

"Yes," he replied, slowly. "I am in grief."

She afterward repeated this to Johanna, who shook her head wisely and bade her not worry. He'd be all cured soon.

"Pack my best dress," she said, frisking about in her old-time manner, "for I must look my best. He may see me."

Johanna's eyes twinkled and she gladly put in the best gown. She was as proud of Karl as if she had been his mother, and often recalled little things she had taught him, imagining they were the foundation of his learning and cleverness.

As Gretchen planned, she and her grandsire stopped at the Holland House, and not "The Red Lion," as formerly. She knew Karl was

there, and wanted to surprise him on Saturday night.

It happened Mr. Gosen was dining there with a friend, the evening of her arrival, and as he was a man much taken with ladies, especially beautiful ones, he did not rest until he had been introduced to her and until he had told her, in padded phrases, how charming she was.

"Tell me of Mr. Kranz," she said, blushing. "I want to hear about him."

"Oh, he is von vonder!" Mr. Gosen exclaimed, raising his chubby hands in emphasis. "Von vonder is Meister Kranz. Von vonder from beginning to ending."

"He is a fine actor, I suppose?"

"Oh, once more he von vonder. I ask how, and he reply, 'Meister Gosen, I have acted it all before'; and I say vhere, and he say, 'In my own life.' Yes, fact, fact that is it. He is *Cronstadt*. He is in love with the young lady *Gretchen*, but she no lofe him. No, no."

Gretchen hung her head.

"It will be interesting," she said, slowly.

"Oh, von vonder. And all who will see it will say, von vonder. Where do you sit, *Fraulein*?"

"Where do we sit, grandsire?" she asked, as he approached. Her grandfather told her what seats they had.

"Vell, you must just sit in the box," he replied, drawing a large red placard out of his coat pocket. "I haf had some handsome boxes put in for the occasion. You must haf one, for I know your beautiful countenance would entrance Meister Kranz."

Gretchen smiled, and the old Colonel thanked him cordially.

"Excuse me," he said, bowing. "I must go, for the time is going like von express train."

Behind the curtain of the Empress Theatre, Karl, pale and nervous, directed the shifting of some scenery and glanced now and then through a peep-hole into the house. His eye glistened as he saw the seats filling, but it seemed as if his strength would forsake him.

"Mine friend," Mr. Gosen said, looking in, "I haf something to coommunicate to you, something to cheer your heart. There is a beautiful young lady to sit in the box over there. She von vonder of loveliness."

"Yes?" said Karl, paying more attention to his wig than to Mr. Gosen. "I will watch for her."

So Mr. Gosen, fat, rosy, and smiling, backed off the stage.

At last the clock in the town hall struck eight and the audience was hushed. A bell rang on the minute, and the curtain rolled up.

Felicia Doersl, a German girl, made an excellent *Gretchen*, and as she entered, singing a German folksong, she was loudly applauded.

The scenery, too, pleased the York belles and dames, for its quaintness was entirely new.

"He comes now," some one in the front row whispered. "See!" And in a breathless pause *Cronstadt* entered. At sight of him the whole house was in an uproar, and he bowed over and over again before they would let him go on with his part.

Several bouquets reached him, which brought the blush to his cheek, at which the ladies in the front row waved their lace handkerchiefs and scarfs.

Suddenly turning to the box, he beheld Gretchen. At once his face became intense, and with all his soul he threw himself into his rôle as *Cronstadt*.

As the play advanced it became absorbing. Everyone sat on the edge of his seat and yielded to his emotion of joy or pain, as easily as if he had been a flower before a zephyr or whirlwind. Gretchen sat without movement, her eyes filling with tears, now of joy, now of anger. In *Cronstadt's* soliloquy, after he had heard of *Gretchen's* engagement, Karl gazed at the girl in the box, and she bent her head before him. How he poured out his soul! His

only soul! The hearts of the people were touched and a silence followed, instead of applause, which showed how deeply each had been moved. When the curtain fell Gretchen found herself the object of many glances. Everyone noticed her, this time not for her own sake, but Karl's, and the old Colonel for the first time felt proud to be a neighbor of Kranz.

The third act showed the foul play at Glebeholm gate, and the old Colonel smiled as he recognized his gate-posts. When *George, Cronstadt's* rival, shot him, there was an expression of sorrow and horror, and Gretchen clasped her grandsire's hand, realizing the awfulness of it, if it were true.

"Have I let a murderer kiss me?" she thought. "How horrible!"

The last scene showed the false lover making his last proposals to *Gretchen*. At his cunning deceit and hypocrisy the faces of the people looked angry and revengeful. Even the *Gretchen* in the box drew up her lip to scorn her own lover. Then followed the last scene, where the village folk were gathered for the wedding. As *George* held *Gretchen's* hand, awaiting the clergyman, suddenly all was darkened, and amid a confusion of forms and words a bell tolled. Then it grew bright, and

Gretchen, left alone, followed the rays of the sun. *George* reappeared in hideous guise, and tried to snatch her back, but the power of the sun was irresistible. She followed it out of sight and the curtain fell.

After the momentary stillness, caused by the play's solemn ending, the on-lookers called loudly for the author.

Karl replied, though quite worn out with his efforts, and bowed repeatedly to the circles of hilarious spectators, and last of all to the quiet, silent figure in the box.

Mr. Gosen, learning of Karl's love for the lady in the box, secretly arranged to have her get into the actors' chaise after the play, while he himself carried off the Colonel.

Gretchen came out first and stepped into the chaise answering the call of Glebe. Waiting several minutes for her grandfather to follow she was relieved to hear the door unlatch and someone say, "Drive to the Holland House!"

"Karl!" she exclaimed in a surprised voice.

"Gretchen," he said, taking her hand, "are you here?"

"Yes," she replied, falteringly. "I am here, and I will tell you now, I believe your play. I have been a fool."

"No, no, dear," he said, soothing her. "Don't say that."

"You have suffered so much," she added in a whisper, "so much."

"But I will be happy now," he replied in a low voice, "at least if you will make me so. Can you love me, can you come to me as easily as the other Gretchen did to the sun?"

"Yes," she replied, sighing, "I love you, Karl."

Then there was silence. Each heard the other's heart beat fast and loud. And as the chaise stopped at the Holland House he kissed her, saying, "Thou art mine! I will come tomorrow, my angel!"

Lightly she stepped from the chaise and tripped across the board-walk to where her grandfather stood. Then and there she told him her love, and as she related it she felt as if it were a dream of heaven.

CHAPTER XXV.

'TIS LOVE THAT KEEPS THE HEART AGLOW.

RETURNING to Waterloo, Gretchen's one thought was Karl. Jennings had heard of their meeting, but had never guessed its significance. He felt too sure of his own power and her weakness to have a qualm.

Calling, as usual, the morning after her return, he was surprised to hear from Johanna that Miss Gretchen wished to be excused from seeing him.

"What do you mean?" he asked, with sudden apprehension. "What do you mean?"

"That she does not want to see you," Johanna said, emphatically.

"But she must!" he exclaimed, stamping his heel into the carpet. "I will raise the roof if she does not."

Gretchen, hearing this, came down, but put the table between herself and the man before speaking.

"I do not wish to see you," she said with decisiveness. "I have found you out."

"What!" he said, clinching his hands. "Say that again."

"You are a villain, a thief, and a murderer almost. Here is your ring and your pearl necklace."

"What do you say?" he hissed, trying to seize her. "Oh, that dog, Kranz! I'll spit him on a stick like a frog. He'll eat the dust for me, and you too, if I say it. I have the law to back me. I have your promise. You took that ring, and you will find it hard to return it. I have the law of betrothal. You accepted my bridal kiss and ring."

"If I could I would cut your kiss from my lips. Here is your ring."

"You young fiend!" he hissed, running round the table unsuccessfully. "You will pay for this with your blood and his. I'll grind you between stones when you are my wife."

"What, sir!" said the old Colonel, entering. "What do you mean? Repeat that, sir!"

"You are a man of honor," Jennings said, changing his tone. "You cannot deny that you promised me your granddaughter, and she's a minor. Now she spurns me, spits me out of her mouth!"

"Why so, Gretchen?" he said, sternly. "You are bound to Colonel Jennings."

"Surely you would not have me marry a vil-

lain, a thief! There is no honor that binds me to such a dishonorable man."

"Pretty speech," Jennings hissed.

"You are bound," her grandfather repeated. "Put that play and Karl Kranz out of your mind. You are bound to this man."

"You are bound," Jennings said, savagely. "Honor is honor with a soldier and gentleman."

"Yes, sir," replied the old Colonel, bristling. "Honor is honor in the army."

"Ah!" said Jennings between his teeth, as he passed out. "Won't I settle her! Won't Barabbas and I clip her wings when we get her! Ah, woman, I'll make you wince!"

That evening Mr. Beuler called to interview Gretchen, who, with Johanna, went fearfully into the room before him.

"Are you Gretchen Glebe?" he said, coldly.

"I am, sir."

"Sit down! Be seated, both. I have here papers of breach of promise served against you by Walter Wrenn Jennings. Know you aught of them?"

"No, sir, except that they be drawn against me for refusing to marry him."

"That is enough. What are your reasons? Have you a witness?"

"I have a witness in York," Gretchen replied, "Mr. Karl Kranz."

"I understand that this man is of foreign birth and parentage. The law demands an English-born witness."

"That I am," Johanna said, proudly. "My mother stopped off in London on her way here, and I was born in London."

"You were not naturalized. That is void, too."

"Oh, please, I was quite natural, sir!"

"The trial or suit comes off this day week," he continued, quite unmoved. "Nothing can stop this trial or annul your engagement but death."

"But death!" Johanna exclaimed.

"Yes, death of either party concerned, or death of guardian or immediate relative. Your age, please? Birth and parentage? Your reason also?"

All of these Gretchen related, and at the close Mr. Beuler walked stiffly out of the room.

"This shows he's a villain," Johanna said, wisely. "Lovers save their sweethearts pain; it's only beasts tear them to pieces."

"He shall never have me!" Gretchen exclaimed. "I'd run away first, or kill myself!"

Sunday morning Karl drove with Gustav on a special coach, and in order to reach Waterloo early, took a relay at Jeremy's and Wilhelm's.

Good Gustavia was sorry to see the horse go out, but Gustav took it all in his own hands, declaring no Sunday should keep the young writer from his best gal and old sire. At this Gustavia patted Karl's shoulder gently and wished him God's grace.

"Won't yer honor ride inside?" Gustav asked, mounting the box.

"No, no. I'll ride with you on top," Karl replied. "I want the fresh air."

"Who's yer gal, anyhow?" Gustav continued, cracking his whip. "I reckon I don't know, and it's the only time in my life I use them words."

"Why, don't you know?"

"Not me; but I know you're changed like lately. Love, eh? It allers did take a gal to set a feller's wheels movin'. I'm thinkin' if it wasn't for my woman's tongue I'd stop and clog."

"Oh, my girl is splendid," Karl replied, with amusement. "She makes me work just by loving me. She brings out all the good in me."

"Oh, that's high talk. I've heard it before from Gustavia. Why, Lord bless us, I'd go off my wit if I weighed and considered and strained through a jelly-bag all my goin's out and comin's in. What's her name in ordinary language?"

"I could not say it in ordinary language. It's too sublime."

"Well, what in heaven is it? What does she answer to Peter's roll call?"

"Gretchen Glebe."

"Why, she's the English cock's gal!"

"Mine now, Gustav." He smiled, looking over the smooth, white fields. "She's as pure as these fields!"

"Black at bottom," Gustav replied. "You love-fellers beats me into hiccoughs and whiskeys at seein' things that ar'n't there!"

"You will be sure to come to York to witness?" Karl said, sobering. "That suit's got to come through right side up. You'll get your money, too, for your coach."

"Sure, I'll be there," Gustav said, loudly. "Count on Gustav Heink for witnessin' and swearin' in courts."

Karl found the Abbot sitting on the nail-keg.

"Not too fine," the old man said, slipping down. "Not too swell."

"No. It's good to be home."

"A sawdust heap, this place."

"Well home, anyway. Here's your sock. Count it out."

The old man chuckled and lifted the sock.

"Over weight," he said, wrinkling his mouth

in a sort of smile. "You're a Kranz. Stick to your word like one, anyway."

He sat by the fire and counted the bright pieces.

"There's Glebe's pile," he said, chuckling again. "And this over."

"That's for you!"

"Get me a new press. You're more a Kranz than I thought. Ho, some one coming."

The door opened and Gretchen entered. "Karl," she said, starting toward him, "you have just come in time; but don't stir out of doors for Jennings is angry. Like a beast!"

"Dear one," he said, leading her to a chair. "I am afraid you have been suffering. I thought of you, but I could not leave. Now tell me all about it. Rest your tired head on my shoulder."

She smiled at his tenderness toward her and told him her tale.

"Fear not," he said gently, at its close. "I have almost completed arrangements, and I am sure we will win. Our suit comes before his, and after it he will not trouble you, I am confident."

"You think not?" she said, doubtfully. "Oh, you do make me so happy. Ask your father to come back, the fire is so cosy. I must share my happiness with him."

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"Sire," Karl called, pleased at her thought.
"You are wanted."

The old Abbot hobbled in, nodded to Gretchen, and sat himself on his barrel.

"Come over here, won't you?" Gretchen called, with some timidity.

"No, no, child. Doves are cooing; no rooster should be crewing."

CHAPTER XXVI.

EMANCIPATION.

AFTER Karl's departure, Monday morning, Gretchen felt depressed. He had cheered her with his confidence and exalted her with his hope; but when he had gone his words rang in her ears as death-knells rather than wedding-bells, for Jennings was set and relentless.

One thing she had determined, however, and that was to run away, or dispose of herself, rather than become the wife of a villain and deceiver.

As she sat alone one morning, looking out over the bleak fields, she saw some one approach the house. "Colonel Jennings," she said, rising, "he has come to torment me again; but," she added, "better this than that he torment and perhaps hurt Karl."

Jennings strode into the room with heavy step and glared at Gretchen, setting his lips in a straight, white line.

"What is it you wish?" she said, mustering all her courage.

"I want you," he hissed, darting round the

table that stood between them, "and I'll have you!"

"No, sir, you will not," she said, evading him. "I will die first."

"You will die then! You've pronounced your own doom. Ah, you wench, you ill-omened woman, is it possible you defy me? Not for long."

"You are a kind lover! What I have missed by not marrying you! Colonel Jennings, beware how you trample on a woman. She has a soul, and so have you. You may crush hers here, but you must crush your own somewhere hereafter. Beware, I say."

And, weak after her emotion, she took hold of the table with trembling fingers.

"I'll have this settled soon," Jennings said in an undertone. "I'll have it sealed this time."

So saying, he rang the bell on the table to summon Johann, but the Colonel himself appeared, looking haggard and stern.

"I'll have this matter settled if you please," Jennings said to him. "Do you, as this child's guardian, swear to deliver her at my home for marriage on the 12th of December?"

"Your home, sir?"

"Yes, no other would do. Here she would elude me, or hide behind her friends. There I'm sure of her."

The old Colonel looked very grave and bent his head.

"Do you swear?" Jennings continued, pacing the room.

"Gretchen," the old Colonel said, turning to her distractedly, "you are bound to this man by honor. A Glebe never yet broke an oath."

"If she refuses," Jennings broke in, "I'll drag her name through the courts, and put a stigma on the Glebes forever."

"Do you hear?" her grandsire urged, "speak."

"I hear," she said in anguish, "but I swear in turn that I will die before I will marry him."

"Now, Colonel, swear upon your sword. Swear that if she refuses and you cannot force, you will settle it as a colonel, as an officer, as a man of honor."

The old Colonel, very pale, and with eyes full of bitterness, took his sword from the wall, crossed it with Jennings', and swore to answer the challenge with it if other answers failed.

"Oh, grandsire!" Gretchen cried in distress, realizing the significance of the oath. "I will not let you suffer. It is a villain that would fight with you. I will never let you suffer for me. Oh, God!" and falling into a chair she covered her face and sobbed violently, while the old man rehung his sword, tears trickling down his cheeks.

"Good-morning," Jennings said, with satisfaction, "good-morning."

The old Colonel did not reply, but bent his gaze sadly on his grandchild.

"Grandsire," she said, bravely brushing back her tears, "you must not do this thing. I would kill him sooner than let him kill you," and she folded her arms about his neck, kissing the tears that had lodged in the wrinkles of his cheek.

"I will let Karl settle him," she ventured. "He would do it, I know."

"A tradesman has no use of the sword, my child; besides, what is it to him?"

"Oh, a great deal," she replied, caressing him to try and soften him toward Karl. "For I love him and he loves me."

"A tradesman marry a Glebe!" the old man said, hoarsely. "Worse disgrace!"

"Oh, my grandsire, does it matter the occupation? Is it not the man? I really love Karl Kranz."

He looked at her in silence, and then, with a gesture of displeasure, put her aside and went out of the room.

"What shall I do!" she exclaimed, throwing herself on the floor. "Oh, God, what shall I do! What can I do!"

All day the Colonel had not left his study. He paced the room in undecided zizgag routes

and refused to unlock his door. The battle raging in his mind was greater than any in which his body had participated, and he had been in true campaigns. Twice he had been wounded, but never had he suffered as upon that afternoon within his silent walls.

About sunset he sat down at his desk with the look of a conqueror.

"Nothing but death can save her," he muttered. "I'm crippled, old, and about worn out. Death would not seem hard to me. But ah, that suicide's hell that I saw as I walked there! Some say, though, that a spirit waits for each of us, no matter how we leave the clay. Some spirit may happily take pity upon me and bear me over intermediate hells. Mayhap Nell Kranz, the Abbot's wife while here, but mine beyond, will come for me. I would go quickly with this thought. Nell's son! I never thought of that. Give my child to him, Nell's boy! That were a joy and pride. Ah, that fiend will never get her, nor will he ever stick his steel through me as he hopes. Come, Heinrick Glebe, taste death and make the grave the bridge for her fair feet! Save her, for Nell's boy!"

Staggering to a cupboard, high on the wall, he opened it and took out a small, dark bottle. "Now heaven come to me!" he cried, swallow-

ing the poisonous draught. Oceola, an old Indian, had given it to him, little dreaming he would ever use it in this manner.

"Twenty hours," he murmured, seating himself in his chair, "twenty hours and I shall see Nell again."

"May I come in?" said a disturbed voice at the door.

"Yes," he said, rising, "come in, little one."

Gretchen stared at him, for his words were sweet and unexpected.

"You have not eaten," she said, handing him a small salver. "Eat this, do."

"No, little one," he said, feeling the deadly food within him. "I have no appetite."

"You are not well," she said, seating herself on the arm of his chair. "Do not worry. I must give in, I suppose; but ah, how can I?"

"You never will have to," he said, gently.

"But you must not fight."

"No, nor will I have to fight. I have a friend coming who promises to settle it all very soon and satisfactorily."

"Oh, grandsire!" she exclaimed.

"He will save us both," he repeated, in a low voice. "He will put us all to rights."

As the old man said this he almost rejoiced at the burning of the poison in his veins.

"There is also another friend coming," he

continued after a pause. "He will not be so kind. He is a mercenary man and will come for money; but if you have Karl you will not sorrow over leaving Glebeholm, will you?"

"No, sire, I would be happy. Karl has money enough for us both."

"It broke my heart to sign away the place, but I had to, for I cannot pay the interest on the debt. But you will have Karl, for the other friend is kind. He will come soon."

"What is his name?" she whispered, with bright eyes. "I would like to meet him."

"Not this time, dear one. You may another time."

Together they sat in silence, both happy.

"Some one to see you, master," Johanna said, breaking the silence.

"Yes," said the old man, rising with apprehension. "Show him in. It may be the money friend," he said aside to Gretchen.

"Why not the other, the good friend?" she whispered.

"Hush!" he said, putting his fingers to his lips. "Hush!"

"Karl!" Gretchen exclaimed, with joy, "come in!"

Karl was somewhat embarrassed at her enthusiasm before the old Colonel, but when he added

his invitation to that of the girl he went with alacrity.

"I have come on business," he said, glancing at Gretchen. "May I see you alone, Colonel?"

"Yes, yes," she said, laughing, "I will go."

"This is my father's debt to you, Colonel Glebe," Karl said, soberly. "May it heal the breach between him and you."

"Yes," said the old Colonel, taking the sock, "I will heal it by giving you Gretchen. Go seek her."

Karl was speechless and left the room full of amazement.

"He has consented," he whispered to Gretchen; "what has happened?"

"Angels have visited him, I think," she replied, throwing her arms about him. "Now I am truly happy."

Twenty hours from the time the Colonel drank the potion he was lying on his bed in great weakness.

"Take—this—sock," he said feebly to Gretchen. "Pay the friend—who comes for money. The other friend is at the door now. Go to him."

At these words Gretchen and Johanna looked out of the window, and when they turned round again the old Colonel was dead.

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“He is dead!” Johanna cried. “He is dead!”

Gretchen, full of bewildered grief, felt his heart, but it was still. The friend had come and gone.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE UNLUCKY JENNINGS.

ON Gretchen's wedding-day the house was full of weeping, for the Colonel lay lifeless. In death he reigned as supreme as in life, and every one came to the bier with awe and reverence. Some were a little frightened of him as in his lifetime, but Gretchen loved him as when he was alive.

She had placed the old Abbot's lily in his hands upon his breast; and though Peter and Mrs. Erb said it should have been a sword, she held her own and kept the lily there.

The funeral procession had just left the gate when a coach drove in with Jennings and a strange gentleman.

"Lock the door," Gretchen called to Johanna, and ran upstairs to her room, bolting the bedroom door and window.

Jennings climbed out first, casting a knowing glance at his companion, Mr. Beuler, the York lawyer.

"Open the door!" he shouted, authoritatively. "Open the door, or I will break it open."

"What do you mean?" Gretchen said, opening the long window in her room. "Beware, gentlemen."

"Open that door, you old woman," Jennings said, laughing loudly. "Once more, open that door."

"What do you wish, stranger?" she said, addressing Mr. Beuler.

"He wants this house," Jennings said, laughing again, "and I want something in it."

"Do you hold the mortgage?"

"Yes," replied the little man, looking up with surprise.

"How much will cover the interest?"

"One hundred pounds."

"What is the principal?"

"Some thousands."

"Will you take five hundred pounds for the present?"

"Five hundred pounds!" he said, surprisedly, "glad to. This shack's no good to me."

Jennings scowled at him and muttered beneath his breath.

"Sign everything properly," she continued.

"Hand the papers to Johanna, and I will give you your money."

The little man smirked and went toward the entrance while she called to Johanna to open the door and stand outside.

"Before I give you the money," she said, showing the gray sock full of gold, "I will give you some advice. Don't ride with that man, for he is dangerous."

The little man looked fearful and backed toward the door, while Jennings swore violently.

"I have here five hundred pounds," she said, calmly. "I will give it to you now if you say so, but I think you had better not ride with that man."

"Bogus money," Jennings sneered.

"Test it, Mr. Lawyer," she replied, throwing out a coin.

"Good enough to keep," Jennings said, putting it into his pocket. "Throw another."

Mr. Beuler's round eyes bulged at this act. He slipped in past Johanna, then whispered to her, and when Jennings turned round they were fast inside.

"Holy Ghost!" he exclaimed, "you traitor," and he shook his fist at Mr. Beuler as he stepped into the coach.

Mr. Beuler took dinner at Glebeholm, and during the meal fell an easy victim to Gretchen. After she had told him of Jennings' villainy in the coach affair he became interested in her story.

"I think Mr. Kranz wrote to me," he said, smirking, "but I was too busy at the time."

"I was afraid he would have trouble," Gretchen said, wistfully. "Oh, dear, I wish it were settled."

"But you must not be so put about," he said, smirking again. "It is not right for beautiful ladies to worry their delicate heads about such stupid things as law-suits."

"But this means a lot to me, Mr. Beuler. If Colonel Jennings wins I will have difficulty in escaping him. He is to bring a suit for breach of promise just afterward."

"A suit on such a beautiful lady? Preposterous! He must be mad."

"No, quite in his senses, I assure you."

"Preposterous! When is his suit to be tried, and when that of your friend, Mr. Kranz?"

"His comes up in a week. Mr. Kranz's in two days."

"Short notice," he said, making a memorandum. "But I will see you through. It is preposterous to worry such a delicate, beautiful young lady as yourself."

"Will you help us?" she said, pleadingly.

"I will carry you through. I consider I am the best lawyer in York, and I will interest myself in the case."

Gretchen gazed at him in wonder.

"Yes, Miss Glebe, I will do this. Excuse me while I make some notes."

"Can this be the good friend?" she questioned to herself. "No, he said he was at the door as he died. I wonder what he meant?"

Full of distress, Karl called in the evening to tell Gretchen his bad luck.

"I can't get a lawyer!" he exclaimed in distress. "Beuler's away, and all the rest refuse."

"You have been neglectful, you bad boy," Gretchen said, teasingly. "Didn't you want me enough to hurry?"

"Oh, dearest, I have racked my brains over it, and so has Gosen, and he adores you."

"What shall we do?" she said, leaning back in the chair. "Part forever?"

"Oh, my love, don't say such a thing. No, I will go and get a lawyer in Kingston. I could be back in two days." And he rose as he spoke.

"No, no! We will find one nearer."

"But we can't."

"Yes we can. Come in here. This is Mr. Beuler, Mr. Kranz."

"Why," Karl exclaimed, "I am glad to meet you, sir!"

"Yes, I'm glad to meet you. Sit down and answer my questions."

The two men then entered into a long and explicit conversation.

The day of the trial the York court-house was

filled with fashionable people who were all eager to see the author, and Jennings the well-known lover. The gossips had spread many translations of the affair among the social circle, so all came, anxious to see how it would end. The charges against Jennings were in themselves romantic, and the sentimental spinsters took pains to know them by heart, so that they could sympathize and scorn according to their judgment and not according to popular fancy. These took the front rows, and each was anxiously surprised when she saw the other in such a place.

Behind ranged the Governor's friends with their bald heads and big bodies; and still farther back were seen Waterloo folks. Gustavia placid, Wilhelm silent, Nichol Schluz scowling and stern, Jeremy with his red hair and broad smile, and Johanna with her hands on her hips and her best green bonnet on her head.

Karl, Mr. Gosen, Gustav, and Mr. Beuler sat opposite Jennings and his elegant friends. It was hard to tell which group was the more attractive.

"That's Jennings' girl," Mr. Beuler said to Karl, turning his head to where the Governor sat. "She's the Governor's second daughter."

"Jennings' girl!"

"Well, his York girl. It's been whispered

she's about to bring a suit against him, that's why the Governor cut off his salary. He's as poor as a church cat now, and look at him wearing a satin neckcloth. I think he imagined the old Colonel had money too."

"That he did, for he told me, now that the old man was bankrupt, he'd not push the breach-of-promise case."

"That's good news."

This brought Gretchen clearly to his mind. He forgot the court for a while to think of her. How happy she would look when it was all over. The color would come to her cheeks again and her eyes would sparkle as they did the first night she came into the shop.

"Look," said Mr. Gosen, plucking his arm. "Those ladies haf put their spy-glasses on you. See that fat lady with the vondrous eyes. She is purring like one big pussy cat to the little Governor."

"Here's the judge. Stand up!"

The trial began with great flourish. Almost too much, for the first witness, Gustav's wife, spoke with no weight. The others, though, were concise; and when Karl stepped from the box, Jennings was seen to frown and tattoo his cane on the floor in a nervous manner. The defence was strong and long, but seemed unreliable, not the solid thing. This Mr. Beuler spoke of; and

as every word he uttered was true, the judge recalled to his mind the manner in which they, especially Jennings, had testified. Mr. Beuler covered everything, and becoming enthused with the justice of his side, spoke with great eloquence. Jennings' lawyer did well too, but he seemed weak after the powerful voice and tongue of his opponent.

Before the verdict was given, Jennings, in some inconceivable way, slipped from the courthouse and took the coach to Waterloo. Thus when the jury pronounced their verdict of "guilty" he was not to be found. This angered the judge, and he ordered his arrest for contempt of court. Karl and Mr. Beuler knew, however, that he would by no means be discovered as easily as his honor seemed to think.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE HOLY OF HOLIES.

WITH what a happy heart Gretchen greeted the sun the morning after the good news of Karl's success. The birds were twittering in the two old firs that nestled beside her bedroom window like lovers, and the children were already on the road shouting and snowballing, for Peter had closed up school for the holiday time. Everything seemed tinged with the joy of Christmas-time. Even the air was full of vibration. Vibration of the swift, expectant heartbeats of the little ones, and the laughter of the babies as they cooed for Santa Claus.

Gretchen felt it all. It seemed as if her breast would burst with the joy within, answering to the joy without. When Johanna entered she embraced her so fervently that the good woman exclaimed, panting:

"Spare my breath. You're like a chipmunk, or rather like a black bear."

"I am so happy I must hug some one," Gretchen replied, releasing her.

"Well, hug the one that makes you happy. Let him suffer for his sins."

"Just wait till he comes home to stay. He comes to-morrow. Won't I hug him!"

"It beats all how the young folks acts these days," Johanna said, straightening her new apron. "Why, when I came near matrimony I sat down quiet, thought on my duties, and mended my clothes for my trussuh."

"I couldn't sew a stitch to-day," Gretchen said, thoughtfully. "I know I couldn't."

"No need. I take it your boy will make money and buy you new clothes all the time. He's got Johann's share of wits with his own."

"You shall have nice things, too," Gretchen added, caressing the old woman's rosy cheeks. "When you and Johann are in London, Karl will be good to you too."

"I've made up my mind to leave Johann here. He won't train. He's set in his own pit, and I can't pull him out without breaking his arms, and as like my back. Besides, he costs passage-money."

"How does he feel about it?"

"Sure, his feeling and mine is one. I told him, and he nodded his head. He and Peter kind of stick together, anyhow. Lord bless us, I'll go, though. Why, that aunt of yours, she nigh blew me up because I forgot to shine the

door-plate. She said that folks would think we was rustin' like it. Just as if your name couldn't rust without you. She don't like the dear boy either, and sure it's him keeps the house. She knows it, but sticks up her nose and forgets it."

"You will help me with my mission," Gretchen said, ignoring her words about her aunt. "I want to build a big house in the country near the sea for sick children and poor ones. I want to form a club for girls where they can enjoy themselves at night; where they can be taught music and things that take their minds off their toil. I want to help Karl with his plays too, and give his actresses a nice time while he entertains the actors. I think the stage is a wonderful thing."

"You have six missions, I should say," said Johanna. "I like them all but the stage. The Bible hates the stage. Why, Nichol gets parts to show that it's bad, and all them that seeks it is bad too; but I reckon your lad will be let off easy, for he's good, and he does the worst of all. He makes the plays."

"The Bible is an ambiguous book, Johanna. I think I could prove by it that the stage is good; that everything is good if not used to excess."

Johanna was shocked at this. She raised her hands in disapproval, so Gretchen was silent.

"There's an old sayin'," Johanna said, after a

pause, "that peoples' souls revisit those they love on earth. Do you think your dead grand-sire hears you talk so?"

"No," replied Gretchen, surprised. "I think souls only come when they are invited."

"Do you, though? Queer about it all, isn't it?"

Going into the sitting-room a little later, Gretchen found her aunt and Peter in close conversation.

"Oh!" said Peter, seeing her, "here she is;" and turning round he spoke to Gretchen.

"Gretchen," he began, giving her a thin smile, "we have been talking about you. We know you purpose being married here, and we do not approve of it."

"I am sorry," she replied, seating herself in her favorite attitude by the window.

"In the first place, the marriage ceremony is sacred, and must be performed in a sacred place before the holy of holies."

"Peter, you strain your profession."

"Insolence," snapped her aunt.

"Well, then, I wash my hands of the proceedings," he said, winking his gray eyes. "You must get some one else to officiate."

"I am sorry, Peter, I would have liked to have you. We are friends, you know, and it's always nicer to have a friend."

"Then you won't consider the church?" her aunt snapped.

"I have considered it often. The holy of holies is in my heart and yours, therefore it matters not in reality where it is; but for association's sake I want it here."

"Have you a new catechism?" Peter said, lifting his thin eyebrows and glancing at her sideways.

"I have a 'cism of some kind, I suppose."

"Darwin, eh? Ha! ha!"

"Stop jesting!" his wife exclaimed. "This is no subject for jesting."

"You will perform the ceremony, Peter?" Gretchen questioned. "I know you will."

"Indeed he will not," his wife snapped.

"Indeed he will," he added, slowly. "Friendship cuts creed and affection severs dogmas."

"Very fine, very showy and fine. I am ashamed of you, Peter Erb, of Glebeholm, Waterloo," Mrs. Erb said, sailing out of the room.

"Ah!" said Peter, "some one comes, so I must go."

"Tell me all about it," Gretchen said, embracing Karl, who blushed beneath Peter's gaze. Tell me quickly. Is it all settled? Can we be married on Christmas-day?"

"We can be married to-day, if you will," he said, smiling. "We are quite free."

CHAPTER XXIX.

HOW ARE THE MIGHTY FALLEN.

THE sudden disappearance of Colonel Jennings caused great consternation in Waterloo. The villa was full of tumult, the Governor himself being the most tumultuous, swearing every hour in the day by his pipe, his sword, his honor, he'd let his relations go to the dogs before he'd help one of them again.

Johanna one day meeting his highness, could not refrain from accosting him.

"Your highness wears purple in his face as well as in his garments!"

"Who are you?" he piped, swelling out his meagre sides like an offended cock.

"I am your son's largest creditor," Johanna answered, bowing.

"My son! Don't insult the Governor of York and Ontario."

"Your grandson, pardon me."

"Worse and worse! Unprincipled and unfeeling woman, begone!"

"Sure, and I'm goin' to England," Johanna

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said, courtesying. "Would that I could take your highness in my carpet-bag, to relieve him of all his troubles."

"Begone!" he shrieked, "begone!" Johanna bowed again and went her way.

There was tumult at "The Villa," but, alas, there was wailing at the Misses Zoellner's. Both ladies were prostrated, and the elder had not ceased moaning for two days over the valueless blue check of her beloved.

"Why did you love him?" the younger sobbed. "Why did you love him?"

"I don't know," the elder wailed in reply. "I don't know."

"He was handsome; but why did you think so?"

"I don't know," wailed the elder, "I don't know."

"He was fascinating; but why did he fascinate you?"

"I don't know," whispered the other, "I don't know."

"He was a man; but why do you love men?"

"I don't know," sighed the other, "I don't know."

"He was a man; but why do women love men?"

"I don't know," echoed a voice, "I don't know."

In this state Karl found them after stumbling up the dark stairs and over the elder's pet lap dog.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed, lighting a candle, "what has happened!"

"We are ruined!" the two ladies wailed.

"Ruined?"

"Yes," said the younger, acting as spokeswoman, "she lent it all to Colonel Jennings, and it's gone."

"Your money all gone?"

"Yes, we are beggars. The mighty tree of Zoellner has been struck at the root; it has fallen."

"Perhaps the Governor will repay you," Karl suggested, calmly.

"Oh, no," the elder said, coming to life. "I have seen his highness. He refuses to pay anything."

"Miserable man!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, no," she continued, smelling her salts. "His highness would, I know, if he could."

Karl smiled at the trust put in princes and mused for a moment.

"I will give you four hundred pounds for the place," he said, slowly.

"Oh, Mr. Kranz!" the younger gasped, "that would be kind; a generous offer!"

"My father is old," he continued. "I want

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him to have a rest. He could live here, and I will give you the store for your maintenance."

There was silence. He almost wished he had not spoken.

"A Zoellner a shopwoman!" the elder exclaimed, smelling her salts vigorously. "Oh, a Zoellner behind a counter? Too horrible! Too horrible!"

"Better than being beggars," the younger cried. "Our fortunes have fallen, so must we."

"Let the noble line of Zoellner be broken? Horrible! Horrible!"

"Not broken, only changed for a season."

"Our father see us serving the people? Horrible! Horrible!"

"Better serve than beg. He's dead anyway, and can't exclaim if he would."

Here Karl rose, so the duet ceased.

"Yes," said the younger, "we will accept your offer of money and the store."

"Emma," interrupted her sister, "I am the first born. Yes, Mr. Kranz, we will take your offers."

Karl bowed his head and said good-evening. Going down the stairs he heard the dolorous tune of "Home, Sweet Home" float from above, followed by Miss Zoellner's chorus of "how are the mighty fallen!"

"How now?" the Abbot said to Karl when he

returned. "How is the elf? Mind you be kind to her. She's worth ten of you in a bunch."

"Yes, I know," Karl said, fidgeting with his hat.

"Mind you treat her well and love her."

"Yes," said Karl, abstractedly.

"You are unconcerned. What is on your mind?"

"I am thinking about you. I want you to leave this place. I have offered it to the bankrupt Misses Zoellner."

"What!" said the old man, furiously. "What!"

"I have offered the store to the Misses Zoellner."

"You infidel! I'd sooner lose you than this place."

"You called it a sawdust heap once."

"It's a pile of gold dust now. No, sir; I won't go hence till I go dead, in a rough box. Mark that." And he thumped his bony fist on the counter.

Karl was taken aback and much disturbed. He had built a castle in the air for the Abbot, and he refused it. He saw it was no use to argue, so went out disappointed, reiterating the Zoellner chorus, "how are the mighty fallen!"

CHAPTER XXX.

NONE BUT THE BRAVE DESERVE THE FAIR.

CHRISTMAS morning was bright and fair in Waterloo, but the blue sky was not more joyous than the groom, or the white snow more sparkling than the bride.

As Karl packed his last box, putting in a forgotten thing here and a toy of his childhood there, a group of wedding guests gathered in the little store.

"Is thy vest velvet or satin?" good Gustavia asked, turning him about. "Velvet—yes, that is best. It weareth longer than satin."

"As if that'd trouble him, Gustavia Wade!" Gustav blurted out. "He's rich now. Wears the best of everything. Look at his neckcloth, patterned on both sides; his tights of real silk, and his long coat lined with blue."

Gustavia looked at all these as Gustav pointed them out.

"Hast thou any of thy father's economy?" she asked again. "It were of more import than thy garments."

"Not an ounce," the Abbot grumbled, from

his barrel-top. "He's none of me. He even gave away the roof over my head."

"What!" exclaimed Gustavia. "Is this true of thee? For shame! Let not gold clog the fountain of thy paternal affections."

"No more of that!" Gustav said, roughly. "This is no prayer-meetin'; it's a weddin'."

Gustavia shrank back.

"Speak on," Karl said, kindly. "Thou art my mother, Gustavia. Speak on."

"Ha!" laughed Gustav. "I'll go, I guess. Come on, Frau Heink."

"Better be off," the Abbot exclaimed, slipping down from his seat. "Am I marked with letters on my pants, Karl?"

"No," replied Karl, smiling, as Gustavia, shocked, had turned away. "You are fine."

"I will go with thee," she said, turning back.

"Come along, then."

Karl watched the two cross the road, and said to himself: "The lily by the rough rock."

As he was strapping his box, Miss Emma poked her head in at the door and said:

"My sister and I are going to the wedding, our last outing. We will take the store next week."

"I—I am afraid I will not be able to let you have it," Karl stammered. "My father refuses to leave."

"Oh, Mr. Kranz!"

"But I will let you keep the house, you see, and I think you can manage then."

"Oh, Mr. Kranz! Keep the house! How kind! I must run and tell Mr. Beuler and my sister."

At the mention of Mr. Beuler's name Karl became curious and went to the door to see what was going on.

There stood the little, fat man, helping Miss Emma across the road, and she with beaming face was relating something to him. He smiled as he returned to the little inner room, where he had one more duty to perform.

"I would take thee if I could," he said, gazing at the face in the ebony frame; "but he won't part with thee! What glorious eyes are thine, so deep and full and sad!"

He gazed long at the charming face, finally putting it aside with a sigh.

Outside the store others had seen Miss Emma and Mr. Beuler walking together.

"Either a lawyer's up or a Zoellner's down," Gustav said, indicating the couple. "Which think you, Nichol Schluz?" And he poked Nichol in the ribs.

"The Lord is no respecter of persons," Nichol replied, soberly.

"Not accordin' to them folk; for, look—here's the other one, feathered and proud."

Nichol and Gustav surveyed with amusement the guests, Gustav making bitter remarks, until Johanna spied them and hustled them into the parlor.

"Here's the groom," they whispered, as Karl entered. "Ain't he slick, though?"

"Gretchen!" called Johanna, from the bottom of the stairs; "come down and take a peep. The dear lamb's here."

Gretchen obeyed, running down the stairs like a fairy.

"Hum, hum!" she called at the door, breaking the silence. "Hum, hum!"

Karl started and went to the door, and every one laughed when they saw she had gone.

"Mocking bird," Gustav suggested.

Presently Peter entered, attired in long robes, and at his entry all were still.

Then followed the bride with her escort, and when the people saw who it was they gasped. Till now it had been secret.

Who but Gretchen could have coaxed the Abbot to dress in his best clothes! Who but the bride herself could have persuaded him to escort her!

How sweet she was! Paler than usual, but with her sunny smile. Gretchen Glebe for the

last moment. Karl trembled when he kissed her for the first time as his wife. He felt the gift too great for him.

When Peter had uttered his last amen there was a stir, and every one pressed forward to see the bride and congratulate the groom. Gustavia alone stood aloof, for she was silently blessing them.

"News! News!" Johanna exclaimed, waving her frilled dress. "News! News!"

"What?" said Karl, smiling on the beaming face. "Tell us."

"Miss Emma's gone and got engaged to Mr. Beuler!"

"Engaged!" exclaimed Gretchen.

"Lord bless us!" cried Gustav.

"Yes, engaged. Her sister told me. He'll tell you if you go into the hall. He says he fell in love with her comin' across the road to-day, she looked so happy."

"Good!" said Karl, remembering what had made her so happy.

"What next?" Gustav said, clumping out of the room into the hall.

"Yes, what next?" Karl said, catching hold of his fairy queen and lifting her into the air.

"What next?"

"To London with you, dear!" she whispered, kissing his cheek. "To London with you!"



